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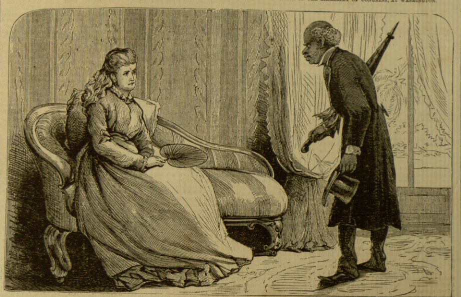

MADAME VARLVILLE AND ADRASTE SCIPIAN, THE VOODOO DOCTOR.

DAME NATURE SLIGHTED.

BY GEORGE W. BUNGAY.

She makes the sweet red roses blow,
And lilies white as sunless snow,
And daffodils of golden glow,
  To kindle love and inspiration.
We pass them by with hasty feet,
We scarcely know that flowers are sweet;
We have not time to halt and greet
  The dear old dame with admiration.

She hangs her leafy banners soft
Upon the forest masts aloft;
She pours her music from the croft,
  From bills of birds of every feather.
We turn our heads and haste along,
Heedless of balmy leaf and song,
To mingle in the busy throng,
  And measure credit's doubtful tether.

She sends her sunshine through the air,
A "cosmetic" for her children fair,
But "parasols" uplifted there,
  A silken insult interposes.
Betwixt them and the shining dome,
Like other flowers shut in their room,
They lose their beauty and their bloom,
  And lilies grow in place of roses.

Wild flower, woodland and waterfall,
A sky of glory over all,
Nature provides for great and small,
  And is it not a sin to slight her?
She may resent the slight, and then
Withdraw her charms from worldly men,
Unless we turn a leaf again,
  And make esthetic records whiter.

The love of lucre and of fame,
The banker's discount, and the claim,
Of notes that bear a trusted name,
  Fill heart and soul to overflowing.
And slighted Nature smiles in vain
In golden light, or weeps in rain,
Or shouts in storms upon the main,
  Or sighs in gentle winds soft blowing.

◆

THE BLACK DOCTOR;

OR, THE

Prophecy of the Voodoo King.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE SPANISH RULE IN LOUISIANA.

By WILLIAM HENRY PECK,
Professor of History in the University of the State of Louisiana.

CHAPTER I.

THE ILLNESS OF MADAME VARLVILLE.

Our story opens in the city of New Orleans, on the morning of the 6th of May, of a year of the eighteenth century.

Madame Ruth Varlville, an aged and wealthy widow, is seated in a large fauteuil of rich white velvet, in one of the many apartments of the Varlville mansion.

She is scarcely convalescent from a recent and nearly fatal illness, and before her stands the man who has saved her life from the effects of a cunning and deadly poison.

This man is Adraste Scipian, the "Voodoo doctor."

A Voodoo doctor is one of a class of unlicensed medical practitioners greatly believed in by the negroes of Africa, South America, the West Indies, and the Southern United States. The ignorant of the whites of our South are by no means devoid of faith in the skill and supernatural powers of these "Voodoo" or "Hoodoo" doctors, who are not always, though generally, of the negro race. Such practitioners, who often have wonderful knowledge of the virtues of forest and swamp plants and herbs, are believed by the ignorant of both races to be aided in their work, whether for good or evil, by ghouls, spirits and invisible personages, and often by the great Evil One.

Therefore Voodoo doctors are much more feared than esteemed, even by those who seek their aid; and at the date of our story such doctors were especially held in awe by the blacks of Louisiana.

The face of Madame Varlville, as we introduce her to the reader, is powerful in its expression of pride, dignity and mental strength, though in repose it is as white and seemingly as cold as the milk in the frosted crystal goblet on the marble table at her side.

This grandeur of feature is also very remarkable from its tenacious retention of a facial and personal beauty for which she was noted in her youth.

Age and trouble of life have not robbed her of any of that wealth of hair which, when its hue was raven black, was the envy of the rival belles of her youthful years; but now, though as glossy and luxuriant as ever, her hair is as white as the ivory petals of her favorite flower—the queenly Magnolia bloom we see in her wrinkled, but still lily-white hand.

Her perfect and exquisitely arched eyebrows retain their pristine inky blackness; and beneath them her large, clear and jet-black eyes beam and flash with an intellectual strength unimpaired by a life of three-score and ten years.

Her robe, ample and flowing, is of the most costly and shadeless white silk; her feet, small for a woman of her large and stately frame, are clothed in slippers of white satin, and rest upon an ottoman of snow-white velvet.

The apartment in which we see her is one that adjoins her bed-chamber, and there is not an article in it that is visible, whether of wood or marble, or of cloth of wool, cotton, flax or silk, or of metal or glass, which is not snow-white, or at least as white as paint, stain or dye can make it.

The crystal goblet on the white marble table is "frosted," and looks as if carved from snow frozen as it thawed; the panes of the windows are "ground," and seem to be thin sheets of snow ice; the massy curtains of costly lace are like cascades of snow-flakes fixed in the air as they fell.

This weird uniformity of white imparts a cold and ghastly glare to the tone of the room, for the covering of the floor is a matting of spotless white, that gleams and shimmers to the eye like a field of snow under a clouded sun.

When Madame Ruth is alone in this room, her large black eyes and inky brows appear startlingly ebon amid the changeless whiteness.

But she is not now alone. The Voodoo doctor is before her; and in strange contrast with the whiteness around, above and under him, this personage is garbed in black from head to heel, and his skin is of the hue of polished ebony.

Adraste Scipian, the Voodoo doctor, is as black as Madame Ruth is white. There is nothing white visible in his exterior, except the whites of his eyes and the pearly glitter of his teeth as he speaks.

He wears his coat buttoned up to his throat; a heavy cravat of silk is wound voluminously around his neck; the cuffs of his coat reach almost to the tips of his fingers; his hands are encased in ill-fitting gloves, wrinkled and much too large; and coat, cravat and gloves are as black as midnight.

His hair, like the blackest wool, is plaited into a score and more of sharp-pointed tufts, each tuft four inches long, and having fastened to its end a tiny bell of bronze. When he skakes his head, this orchestra of little bells tinkles and jingles not unmelodiously.

His beard, jet black and crispy and massive in growth, covers his face even to the tops of his cheek-bones; and his eyebrows, uniting between the eyes, almost wholly hide the latter, which are, however, black, keen and powerful.

We have just said that Madame Ruth is scarcely convalescent from a recent illness; and yet as we introduce the two to the reader, this is the first time that she has ever gazed upon the Voodoo doctor with conscious eyes.

His height Madame Ruth can only conjecture, for his figure is greatly bowed, and his legs are very crooked. He is both humble and hideous in aspect; and yet, though so repulsive in person, so insignificant in race, so despised in his medical pretensions by the educated whites, he has within a few days achieved a feat in medicine which obtains for him this private interview with one of the most stately ladies of the city.

Five days ago, that is, on the evening of May 1st of our story, at about the hour of ten, Madame Ruth, till then in robust health, suddenly sank into a cataleptic swoon, and was soon after pronounced dead by three eminent white physicians, of three nationalities: Dr. Alhan, an Englishman, Dr. Valté, a Frenchman, and Dr. Capato, a Spaniard.

Then a fourth physician, a German, was sent for; and he, Doctor Helmstadt, agreed with the three others, and said as they did:

"Ah, yes! Madame Varlville is dead."

There was present at that decision of the four white doctors one other doctor, though one whom none of the four would have listened to except in scorn, had he opened his mouth in their presence. That one was Adraste Scipian, the Voodoo doctor.

Let us go back to last night, that is, the night of the 5th of May of our story, to the hour of ten.

At that hour Madame Ruth, alone in her bedroom with one attendant at her bedside, a mulattress named Mercita, suddenly regained a consciousness that had been lost to her since May 1st. For four days and four nights Madame Ruth had been wholly unconscious of all that took place around her.

"Where am I!" were the first words she spoke as perfect reason came suddenly to her.

Mercita, a very dark mulattress of middle age, the housekeeper and favorite servant of the sick lady, detecting instantly both by eye and ear the return of consciousness to her mistress, replied in a joyful tone:

"Ah, Madame! Do you know me?"

"You? Yes, you are my good Mercita."

"Oh, I have feared you were never to know me again!"

"I have been very ill, then?"

"Near death, Madame. So near death that at one time we thought you were dead. And after that—oh, for a long time we have had little hope that you were ever again to know any of us. But here is a drink you are to take. Scip—I mean the doctor—the one who gave us hope"—stammered Mercita, "said you were to sip this as soon as consciousness came back to you."

Had Madame Ruth suspected that the potion which Mercita then gave to her had been prescribed by Adraste Scipian, by a Voodoo doctor, she would have dashed it aside with such strength as indignant scorn might have given her, and rebuked her attendant. Fortunately Mercita checked her utterance of the name at its first syllable—Scip—and instantly repeated the sound in the word sip.

Madame Ruth drank the potion, supposing that it had been prescribed by her own family physician, Dr. Otis.

Though she had never seen Adraste Scipian, she had heard that there was a Voodoo doctor of that name, and for all quacks, charlatans and Voodoo impostors she had a severe contempt.

And so, till recently, had the mulattress Mercita—a woman with whose life was connected a strange history, of which we will speak hereafter.

"The drink is to make me sleep, Mercita?" asked Madame Ruth, after taking it.

"Yes, Madame—"

"But before I sleep I must ask a few questions. I was alone when I was taken sick—or where was I? I am in my bed now—"

"In your bed now, Madame. I found you lying as if dead or dying on the floor, in the room that used to be Master Leon's, now the bedroom of Master Adrian."

"Ah, I remember! I went into my grandson Adrian's room. What is to-day, Mercita?"

"It is Friday night, Madame."

"The day of the month, Mercita?"

"It is the fifth of May, Madame."

"The fifth of May," repeated Madame Ruth reflectively. "Have I been unconscious four nights and four days?"

"Yes, Madame."

"Grand Ciel! Had I been long on the floor when you found me, Mercita?"

"I do not think so, Madame. You went into Master Adrian's room at about nine o'clock, as was your custom—"

"Yes, if I do not meet my grandsons at supper I always go to their rooms at nine, to have a chat with them before I sleep. I first went into Leon's room—I remember that. Leon was not there. I then went into Adrian's room. Neither he nor Leon were there. It was nearly nine—I remember that."

"Yes, Madame; and between nine and ten I heard you laughing loudly—"

"Me? You heard me laughing loudly!" cried Madame Ruth, amazed. "I have not laughed aloud since the death of my two daughters—years ago!"

"It was very strange to hear you laugh aloud, Madame; for never before did I hear you laugh. But certainly I heard your voice, singing and laughing," replied Mercita firmly.

"She heard my voice, singing and laughing! I must have gone mad before I fell. Singing! I have not sung since my husband died, and that is more than thirty years ago. Laughing aloud! I have not more than sadly smiled since my only children, my twin daughters, died, and that is nearly twenty years ago."

"And, Madame, we now know that you were even dancing."

"I!"

"Madame, there was, we now know, no one in the room with you. I and two of the servants were in the room immediately under Master Adrian's room, between nine and ten o'clock of the night of Monday last, the first of May. We heard your voice, as if you were conversing with some one in a very lively tone. We supposed Master Leon or Master Adrian was with you, though we heard the sound only of your voice. After a time we heard your voice in laughter."

"Good Heaven!"

"Ah, Madame, this conversation is agitating you too much. Sleep, and when you awake I will tell you all—"

"No—I must hear more now," replied Madame Ruth imperiously.

"Scipian said," thought Mercita, before again speaking to her mistress, "that it would be impossible for her to remain long awake after taking the drink which I have just given her, unless I made her angry. And she will be angry if I do not tell her more."

"Dear Madame," continued Mercita, in a gentle tone, "I must obey you if you command, but—"

"But I command," said the haughty, though invalid lady.

"Madame, when we in the room below—in my room, I mean—heard your voice in loud laughter—"

"In loud laughter!"

"In loud laughter, Madame—we were greatly surprised. Then we heard such a noise and beating of feet as is made by dancing—"

"Good Heaven!"

"Not light dancing, Madame, but such as is called a jig, or a shuffle, or a break-down, all over the floor of Master Adrian's room—now in the middle, now at one side, now at another; and much clapping of hands and loud laughter—"

"Not my laughter!"

"Madame, the laughter became so wild that we began to believe that it was not your voice."

"Began to believe that it was not my voice!"

"That one or both of your grandsons were with you. That they were dancing and laughing in mimicry of some one to amuse you, Madame."

"Yes—go on."

"After a time all became still, very still, and at length I thought I heard your voice in the upper hall. I went up, and then into Master Adrian's room. I found you alone—lying as if dead or dying on the floor. I called for help, and we brought you to your bed. I discovered that your heart still fluttered as I placed my ear upon your bosom—yes, Madame, fluttered is the word, for your heart no longer throbbed. It fluttered like the wing of a wounded bird, by fits and starts. We were wild for the aid of a doctor—"

"And what doctor came? Who has been attending on me?"

"Oh!" thought Mercita, "I shall have to tell her the truth. That Adraste Scipian, a negro, a Voodoo doctor, has had her under his care!"

"Ah, Madame," she replied aloud, "as is often the case when a doctor is needed instantly—"

"Of course you sent for Dr. Otis?"

"Yes, Madame, but he was not even in the city. But at the same time I sent eight or ten of the servants in every direction to hurry any physician to your aid. And before one arrived, we who remained near you believed that you were dead. The first one to come was—was—"

"Well? Well?" demanded Madame Ruth, for Mercita hesitated.

"Adraste Scipian," Madame.

"Adraste Scipian? Adraste Scipian? What! A Voodoo doctor!" exclaimed Madame Ruth, in indignant surprise. "The man I have recently heard some of the blacks speak of! The impostor—for all Voodoo doctors are impostors! You dared to call in his aid!"

"Madame, I pray you to be calm while I tell you. When all of those whom we had sent to find a doctor returned, saying that not one was to be found, some one said to me, 'The new Voodoo doctor, Adraste Scipion, is standing under the lamp across the street. He is said to be a very wise Voodoo doctor.' I did not send for him, Madame, but some one did, and he came in. I have never seen him before. I even shuddered as his eyes—he has a piercing glance—met mine. He looked at you. He felt your pulse. He retired to a dark corner of the room, and sat down on the floor, saying, 'I say nothing. I will do nothing unless the white doctors give up the case. They will say Madame Varleville is dead. They will tell you to bury her. I wait.' And, Madame, he waited. Half an hour passed, and three great physicians came."

"Who, Mercita?"

"Doctor Alhan—"

"Ah, the famous English doctor."

"Doctor Valté—"

"The noted French doctor. Well?"

"And Doctor Capato."

"The first Spanish physician in the city, Mercita."

"Yes, Madame. The three arrived at the same moment. They looked at you. They examined your case after the manner of experienced physicians. They all said you were dead."

"Ah!"

"Then they sent for Doctor Helmstadt—"

"The renowned German physician—the great botanical doctor?"

"Yes, Madame; and when the German came into the room, I noticed that Scipian stole from his corner to where he could fix his eyes upon the face of Dr. Helmstadt."

"Why?"

"I do not know, Madame. I only noted the fact, because I shuddered."

"Because you shuddered! And why did you shudder?"

"Madame, there was something in the eager, anxious stare of Scipian, as he gazed at the botanical doctor during the latter's careful examination of your case, that reminded me of a man who is dead—I hope—no, not hope, since I believe that man is dead. One does not like to see that which has a terrible memory connected with it, Madame—"

"No—and what said the German?"

"He said the same as the three others had said, Madame. They all said in substance, 'Madame Varlville is dead. She was three-score and ten. Her vitality, hitherto very strong, failed suddenly.' One wrote a certificate to that effect, and all signed it. I am sure I heard Scipian stifle a laugh of scorn as the four great doctors one after another signed the certificate."

"The doctors did not hear him?"

"No, Madame, nor see him. He came forward as soon as the four physicians had left the room—"

"And where were my grandsons?"

"Master Leon was not in the city—"

"Not in the city!"

"No, Madame. On the evening of the first of May he departed for Mobile. He left a note for you, which should have reached you before you were taken ill, but the boy he gave the note to did not deliver it at the house until the next day. Master Adrian opened the note. It simply stated that Master Leon was going to Mobile for a few days, as he has often done."

"Yes, he likes to visit some friends he has there. And Master Adrian?"

"Master Adrian was at the theatre. He came home the instant he heard you were ill."

"Of course; and so would Leon have come, had he been in the city. Where are my grandsons now?"

"Master Adrian sleeps. He has remained in the house every moment since he returned from the theatre on the night of May first—last Monday night. He has been at your bedside, Madame, nearly all the time."

"Oh, I doubt not he has a good heart, though—but where is Leon?"

"He has not returned."

"Not returned! He does not know—he has not been told—"

"Oh, Madame, we have heard that he is on a hunting expedition in Alabama, so we know he cannot have heard of your illness. He may not hear of it for several days yet—nor even until he returns to New Orleans."

"Very true. But tell me more of this Voodoo doctor. Surely he has not been in any way my physician!"

"After the four doctors had departed, Madame, Adraste Scipian came forward, and said to Master Adrian:

"'Now I will speak. Since the great white doctors have spoken, let a black doctor speak. You have heard what they said—all in this room heard. They said 'she is dead!' The summer heat is upon us, and the yellow-fever is in the city. You must bury her—for the four great white doctors say she is dead. There is their grand certificate on the table. Well, I, Adraste Scipian, the black Voodoo doctor, declare that if you bury Madame Varlville before three days you will bury her alive!'"

"Oh, Grand Ciel!" here exclaimed Madame Ruth, *a shiver of horror thrilling through her* veins.

"Madame, but for this Voodoo doctor," said Mercita, "you would have been buried alive."

Madame Ruth shuddered as she heard these words; and not because she feared death, but because she saw that but for what appeared to be the mere accidental presence of a despised Voodoo doctor, she would have been buried alive, and death would have grappled with her after the marbly portals of the tomb had closed her in.

CHAPTER II.

ADRASTE SCIPIAN.

Mercita continued:

"Madame, we had not a doubt that you were dead before the four physicians declared unanimously that you were. Your eyes were open and fixed like the glassy stare of the dead. You were cold; in fine, you were like a corpse. Of course, after the decision of the physicians, we could not think that you were not dead. But when the Voodoo doctor declared that you were still alive, we all exclaimed, 'Ah!' There were many of the household in the room, and Master Adrian was also present. He said to Scipian:

"'You declare that Madame Varlville is still alive?'

"'I do; and that within a week, if the case shall be given to me, she shall be able to converse with you, to leave her bed, to walk about—to be nearly as well as she was this morning.'

"'Then take the case,' said Master Adrian. 'The white doctors have given it up. I give it to you.'

"'And I will take it,' replied Scipian; 'but only upon one condition.'"

"Ah, the inhuman wretch!" cried Madame Ruth. "To demand conditions at such a moment."

"So I thought, Madame. I cannot yet see the man without a shudder of fear and dislike at my heart."

"Well, the condition?"

"He demanded only that no other doctor, white or black, should be called in to even look at you. He said to Master Adrian:

"'You alone now have power to command in this case. Your cousin, Mr. Leon de Vargas, is not present. The white doctors have said that Madame Varlville is dead. I saw one of them thrust a card in your hand as he went away. You have it in your hand now, Master Adrian. You have not looked at it.'

"'No, I have not looked at it,' replied Master Adrian; and as he spoke, he glanced at the card which one of the four physicians had given him. He uttered a low cry, and let the card fall. I picked it up. Here it is, Madame," and Mercita gave to her mistress a card, on which were set forth the name, address and terms of a fashionable undertaker.

"Go on," said Madame Ruth. "I shall hate those four quacks as long as I live, even if I were to live a thousand years—no, not hate them, but despise them. And yet they are called very learned men."

"And are, Madame. But in your case all were deceived. When the card fell from Master Adrian's hand Scipian said:

"'Is it not the card of an undertaker?'

"'It is,' replied Master Adrian.

"'Ah, so I thought,' said Scipian, and drawing his shoulders nearly to the top of his head. 'You see! The white doctors refer you to the undertaker. Well, give me the case, with your promise, Master Adrian, that I alone shall prescribe for Madame Varlville, and that no other doctor, white or black, shall even enter this house for six days, and I will see what I can do.'

"Master Adrian said instantly:

"'I give you entire control of the matter. I pledge you my word of honor that you shall not be molested, if Madame Varlville shows the slightest sign of having life within a day after you begin to doctor her. And if you restore her to us I will reward—'

"But before Master Adrian could finish his promise of reward, Scipian cried out, pointing at your lifeless form:

"'She will reward me. If I fail, I will ask no reward—not even a penny. If I succeed, I will ask her to grant me a request.' "

"Ah! He has a request to ask of me!" exclaimed Madame Ruth, much surprised. "He must be a very singular man—this Adraste Scipian, Voodoo doctor!"

"Madame, his very presence, nay, even a sight of him at a distance," said Mercita, shivering, "makes my blood run cold, my flesh to creep, my heart to leap to my throat. I fear him, Madame—I fear him, and I know not why."

"I might tell you why, Mercita, had you ever told me the history of your life—of which, before I purchased you of the Spanish negro trader, I know nothing," said Madame Ruth, both kindly and reproachfully.

"Ah, Madame," replied Mercita, kissing the hand of her mistress, "you have been more my friend than I have been your servant, and some day I will tell you my secret."

"True; your secret is your secret, and I have no right to demand your confidence."

"Ah, dear Madame!"

"Only your service, for I am your mistress—and not your confidence, for we are both women, though of different races. But let that pass. Years ago I told you that you had a secret, and that I should not seek too eagerly to penetrate it. Let us speak of this Voodoo doctor, for my eyes are growing very heavy, and yet I am burning to know what he did to restore me to life and consciousness."

"Madame, the moment he heard the promise of Master Adrian, Scipian took from his pocket a vial—a green glass vial, shaped like a frog—indeed, I have since observed that all of his medicines, dry or fluid, he keeps in vials of the most uncouth shapes; such as those of frogs, snakes, lizards, great beetles and the like reptile forms—well, he took from one of his hundred pockets a green vial, and mixed some of its contents in a glass spoon. He forced the dose into your throat—"

"He did not make any of those howlings, mutterings and pretended incantations used by Voodoo doctors in general?"

"No, Madame. He acted as calmly, speedily and quietly as if he had been our good old Dr. Otis himself. In five minutes you began to breathe again—"

"Ah!"

"And to move your hands. And then you began to speak—"

"To speak?"

"As one speaks in a delirium, Madame. From the hour you were taken ill to this, Madame, you have not conversed consciously. To-day at noon Scipian said to me:

" 'To-night, or by midnight, I think Madame Varlville will become perfectly conscious, and be able to converse a little. To-morrow, if she feels strong enough, she may get up. In a week she will be quite well. I will not come again, unless I am sent for.' "

"It is very strange," said Madame Ruth. "And only Adraste Scipian has been my medical attendant?"

"No one else, Madame; and he came three times each day. And, Madame, during all your illness you have had regular meals by his order."

"It is wonderful! Well, I must sleep, I see, for my eyes will close. And to-morrow I wish to see this Voodoo doctor," said Madame Ruth, who soon after sank into a deep slumber.

She awoke in the morning strong enough to leave her bed, to be robed and to meet Adraste Scipian.

But before we narrate what passed at the first interview between Madame Ruth and the mysterious Voodoo doctor, let us say a few words of the strange movements of the latter, just before he became the preserver of the former.

For two days prior to the sudden and remarkable prostration of Madame Ruth—that is to say, on the 30th of April and the first of May of our story—Adraste Scipian was hovering near the Varlville mansion as a vulture circles around that expected prey upon which the foul and rapacious bird desires to batten.

The Varlville mansion, were it existing to-day, would be called an ancient edifice of imposing exterior. At the date of this story it stood upon what is now called Esplanade street, in a great space now bounded by four streets which we need not name. That space is now covered by many modern buildings, nor is there to-day—1871—a single vestige of the large Spanish structure once well known in the Crescent City as the Varlville Mansion.

The principal edifice stood alone, and was surrounded by a magnificent grove of tropical trees and shrubbery, among which were oranges, limes, palms, oleanders, myrtles, oleasters, bananas, figs, and many others peculiar to that warm and prolific clime. Before the house were two gigantic live-oaks, from whose vast and irregular branches hung mighty festoons of gray moss.

A strong and high wooden fence surrounded the main premises, and inclosed a large garden of flowers, lawn and shrubbery, amid which the walks of shell and sand were as white as snow.

The day before Madame Ruth was prostrated, and on that day also, the Voodoo doctor had haunted the vicinity of the Varlville mansion like a restless ghoul, or hovered near it like a hungry vulture, or flitted past it like a bat.

Some of the servants of the house saw him on the first day, either at a distance and motionless, or trotting swiftly by on his great gaunt gray mule. By some he was seen also on the second day.

But none spoke to him, as all knew the dislike held by their mistress toward Voodoo doctors; and besides, all of the blacks believed Adraste Scipian was a wizard who would resent any questioning, or even salutation, not intended to procure a patient for his practice.

Little was known of him, except that he lived somewhere in the swamp toward Lake Pontchartrain.

Madame Ruth fell sick on the first of May, and was first so discovered by Mercita, at about the hour of ten on the night of that day.

For an hour and more prior to that attack Adraste Scipian was crouching in a dense growth of fig-trees opposite the main gate, or street gate of the Varlville premises.

Completely hidden amid the dark green and fragrant foliage of these low-branched and large-leafed trees, into which his ebon-hued figure had glided like a shadow as the pall of night fell over the city, he had crouched and waited with the noiseless and motionless patience of a spider.

He was in the same secure hiding-place all the night of the 30th of April. He did not have to remain there all of the night of the 1st of May. At about the hour of ten of the last night he detected that something very unusual, something very alarming, must have happened in the Varlville mansion.

He heard loud cries of dismay and of command in various parts of the dwelling. He saw the flashing and vanishing of many lights, as those who carried them ran from room to room. He heard the street gate, which was of iron and brass, grind on its hinges and clash again and again, as it was hastily opened by this and that one hurrying into the street; and he heard the names of half a score of physicians called out in eager and urging voices, as those who came into the street ran, some one way and some another.

Then it was that Adraste Scipian left his covert of fig foliage, and placed himself within the dull beams of one of those old swinging oil lamps by which the darkness rather than the concealments of the night was made visible.

New Orleans at that time had no gas, but her larger streets were sometimes partially lighted by wretched oil lanterns of uncouth shape and ghastly dimness, swung from tall posts which hideously resembled black gibbets.

Scipian placed himself so that the muddy rays of the lantern shone upon his black figure, and waited.

Each of Mercita's messengers, as he or she returned from a vain search for a physician, saw the Voodoo doctor standing motionless near the gallows-like lamp post.

At last he was asked to go into the house. Of his attendance upon Madame Ruth something has been told. His skill had saved her life, and on the morning of the 6th of May she awaited his coming in that apartment of her dwelling which was called "The White Room."

It is ten in the morning, and Mercita has just ushered Scipian into the presence of her mistress, and left the two alone.

For the first time in her life the firm and haughty eyes of Madame Ruth are able to study intelligently the face and form of Adraste Scipian, of whose presence and acts she had no knowledge while she was ill.

When introduced by Mercita he bowed low, but uttered not a word.

Mercita having withdrawn, he stands as motionless and as silent as a statue, his eyes fixed on the floor, his form bent, his head bowed. Mute humility, conscious personal insignificance, and a desire to serve, seem combined in the repulsive appearance of the man.

His garb, we have said, is wholly black. It is also old, tattered, patched, dingy, loose, and ill-fitting. It is easy to see that his coat is the cast-off and threadbare cassock of a priest, and that it was never made for Scipian. Its skirts descend to his heels. The volume of this desecrated cassock nearly conceals his legs, which from the knees to the ankles are wrapped about in black rags. His feet are covered in enormous shoes of black cloth. His shoulders are very high, and as he stands before Madame Ruth, the lobes of his ears touch them. In these lobes he wears earrings carved from jet or ebony.

At first Madame Ruth cannot make out the shape of these earrings, as they are hidden in the huge wrinkles of his ill-fitting coat at the shoulders.

She gazes upon him intently, and shudders.

"And to this creature—to this hideous African," she muses, "I am indebted for my life!—for not being buried alive! *Grand Dieu!*"

In one hand he holds his hat—a tall crowned hat with an enormous brim, black, weather-beaten and battered. When this hat is on his head his tiny bells of bronze are mute, or their tinkling unheard.

In his other hand is a cane, on which he leans as if to support his bowed frame. The grasp of his fingers in their black glove hides for the moment the shape of the head of the cane, but the cane itself is serpentine in form. When he turns the cane around upon its steel ferrule it looks startlingly like a huge black viper convolving spirally upward into the palm and sleeve of Scipian.

"You are Adraste Scipian, are you?" at length says Madame Ruth.

He bows again, and raises his eyes. They are large and strangely powerful. They are, in fine, the only feature of his face to be clearly seen when he looks at any one. His hair, growing so far down upon his forehead as almost to unite with that of his beetling eyebrows, permits not more than half an inch of the black forehead to be seen. His nose, whatever its original shape, whether Ethiopic or aquiline, is deformed by a huge wen or carbuncle on each nostril.

"I am Adraste Scipian, Madame," he replies, as he bows; and recovering from this last bow, he stands more erect than hitherto, so that his head goes up more from the collar of his coat, and the earrings swing into view.

Madame Ruth shudders at the sound of his voice, which is sharp and raspy, with none of that oiliness of tone peculiar to most Africans when speaking humbly. She shudders again as her quick eye detects the hideousness in miniature of Scipian's earrings. They are of jet or ebony, and each is a small semblance of the human skeleton, delicately wired and fashioned, so that the joints articulate, as if alive with tremulous, quivering and spasmodic life.

He moves his cane, and it seems to be crawling into his hand unceasingly.

"And you had—that is, you assert that you alone had the power to save my life, Adraste Scipian," continues Madame Ruth, after a pause, during which she overcame a desire to order Scipian from her presence, as a creature too horrible for her to converse with.

Madame Ruth had commanded this interview to be brought about with no just conception of the character with which she was to converse. She was a slaveholder, as were nearly all the whites of the country in which she lived. She had that cold and haughty contempt for Voodoo doctors common to her caste and race. In sending for Adraste Scipian to converse with him, she had had no suspicion that her illness had been the effect of a deadly poison, but she was actuated by sentiments both of curiosity and gratitude. She desired to see and speak with this wonderful Voodoo doctor; to thank him, to reward him liberally, and to dismiss him.

When she had first glanced at him, she had thought thus of him:

"Yes, it is as I thought. He is a black charlatan, like all that I have seen, only uglier and more repulsive. Chance has favored him in attending upon me; and yet how did this African quack know that I was not dead?"

When she had seen his eyes as he first lifted them to her own, she mused thus:

"Ah, a most powerful eye! Unlike the cunning and rolling eyes of any Voodoo doctor that I have ever seen. His glance seemed to pierce my brain. It is very strange. Can it be true that some of his despised and inferior race are gifted with supernatural powers of healing? Surely Heaven would not pass by the lordly white race, and confer such power upon a creature like this—a creature scarcely human in his appearance. No. I have been very ill, it is true. I was doubtless in one of those strange and very rare cataleptic trances which have sometimes deceived even very experienced physicians. This man, ignorant and barbarous in everything else, chanced to detect some sign of life not suspected by the four physicians, and made the most of it—favored by chance and perhaps some knowledge of medicine."

But when she had heard the voice of Scipian she recognized the same expression of confident power that she had read in his eyes. He spoke excellent French too, though with a marked negro accent.

To her second remark he replied:

"Yes, Madame. Of the five doctors who were near you on the night of the sixth of May, there was but one able to detect that you were alive; and that one alone, of all the doctors in America, was also able to save your life. I am he."

He bowed again, more humbly than before, and as he did so he placed his cane under his arm, his orchestra of bells tinkling loudly.

Madame Ruth now saw for the first time that the head of the cane was very large, and if not the skull of some animal, fashioned in that repulsive shape.

"Tell me, Scipian," said she, after a glance of disgust at the head of the cane, "what sign of life you detected in my apparently lifeless body?"

"Madame, are we wholly alone?"

"You may see that at a glance, Scipian."

"And no one can overhear what I say, Madame?"

"There is no one of my household who would dare even to wish to listen to my conversation when I desire to be private," replied Madame Ruth haughtily. "We are alone, but a touch of my hand upon this bell cord will instantly interrupt our conversation."

"Ah, Madame, then I will tell you something. Not how I detected that you were alive, but that I detected instantly that you had been poisoned."

"Poisoned! Impossible, Scipian."

"It is true, Madame; but I do not say that any one designedly poisoned you."

"Of course not," said Madame Ruth coldly. "But if you, who saw me before the four physicians saw me, believed that I was still alive, why did you not say so? And especially if you suspected the presence of poison, why did you remain silent?"

"Madame," replied Scipian humbly in mien, and yet with a strange and indescribable loftiness of scorn and triumph in the glance of his eyes, which he opened wide by lifting his heavy brows, "those four grand physicians would not have listened to Adraste Scipian—a miserable Voodoo doctor! Had I spoken—had I even dared to show myself to them, they might have beaten me with their gold-headed canes—especially that German, who thinks no one knows so much about botany as he. Besides, Madame, they would have said, 'Eh! Poison! What poison? What poison?' and then laughed at me, for not one of them knows—no, not even Helmstadt, who knows more than all of them—not one of them has ever heard of that poison by which you were struck down. Ah, Madame," added Scipian, shaking his head so that his bells jingled loudly, "even some of the Voodoo doctors, that are mere impostors in many things, know secrets of medicine unsuspected by great white chemists."

"So I have heard the blacks—who know nothing—often say. So I have heard Voodoo doctors—who are all barbarous charlatans—boast," said Madame Ruth, with cold contempt. "I know that some negroes, like some Indians, have a certain skill in rude physic, and so have dogs, which eat grass when they are ill."

"Madame does not believe she was poisoned?" asked Scipian, bowing humbly.

"No, Scipian."

"Madame will let Adraste Scipian prove it?"

"Well, I will listen to you, Scipian."

"Thanks, Madame. First, there does not grow anywhere in America the plant which yields a seed like that by which you were poisoned. Secondly, no one in America knows anything of that plant except Adraste Scipian. Only he has seeds of that plant. Only he knows how to extract from those seeds their peculiar strength, and how to confine that strength in a liquid which is tasteless and odorless. Only he has recently made such an extract, and confined it in one of his vials. The vial in which he put it is of a peculiar shape and color. It is red and blue mingled, and it is of glass, shaped like a toad. That vial was stolen from my hut in the swamp three days before you were prostrated."

"Indeed!" said Madame Ruth, now much interested.

"It was full of the poisonous extract, Madame, when it was stolen from me. It is half empty now," said Scipian; and as he spoke, he drew from one of his pockets a vial of a purplish color, shaped like a toad.

"This is it, Madame."

"The same that was stolen from you?"

"The same, Madame."

"And where did you find it, Scipian?"

"In this house, Madame."

"In my house!" exclaimed Madame Ruth, staring at the vial as Scipian held it toward her in the palm of his hand. "In what part of my house? I hope you are telling a lie—no; I mean I hope you have made a mistake."

"I neither lie nor make a mistake, Madame. Let me speak of the effect of the poison upon you. I assert first, that you ate or drank something which had been impregnated with this extract. You did not partake of that something largely at once."

"What mean you by that?"

"I mean that you ate by bits, or drank by sips, or both, of whatever had been impregnated with this extract, Madame. Think, Madame."

"I do," said Madame Ruth, more startled than ever. "What if I had eaten or drunk largely at once of the poisoned substance?"

"You would have fallen dead on the spot, Madame. I mean, that had you swallowed half a teaspoonful at a time, even as it would be diluted in a gallon of water, you would have fallen dead ere you could have drawn a second breath after drinking it. The one that stole this vial from me knew very little of the peculiar powers of its contents. He or she knew or believed only that it was a deadly poison. Remember, Madame, that I do not say a special attempt to take your life was made—"

"Of course not. I have not an enemy in the world," said Madame Ruth quickly.

Scipian bowed, and continued:

"*True;* Madame Varlville should not have an enemy in the world. One of the peculiar effects of the extract is this: If a person takes a very little of it, he feels exhilarated; a very little more, he laughs—"

"Ah!" exclaimed Madame Ruth, remembering what Mercita had told her.

"Even if he had never laughed in all his life before," continued Scipian, "he would laugh after taking a little of this extract. Some day some great chemist will discover a gas which will, when inhaled, produce effects very similar to the effects caused by chewing and swallowing the seeds from which I make this extract: first, exhilaration; then low laughter; then loud laughter; then an irresistible inclination to violent action, such, for instance, as dancing—"

"Ah!" exclaimed Madame Ruth.

"Sometimes very wild dancing, and in a most absurd way, Madame—such as may be seen among the negroes at any of their frolics; a 'jig,' a 'pigeon-wing,' a 'break-down,' a 'double-shuffle.' The gravest judge, or priest, would fling his heels in wild ecstasy, after swallowing a few drops of this—diluted."

"Good Heaven!" thought Madame Ruth, shuddering. "It was well that I was alone. Rather than to be seen playing such pranks would I be found dead!"

As if he had penetrated the thoughts of Madame Ruth, the Voodoo doctor continued:

"When you partook of that which was poisoned, Madame, you must have been alone; else your singular conduct would have alarmed others, that is, any one present, and they would have called in a physician instantly. You first felt a strange but delightful exhilaration of heart, and lightness of brain. You began to laugh; perhaps to talk merrily, under the delusion that others as merry as yourself were present. You sang merry songs. You gesticulated— Ah, Madame, you begin to remember that."

"Yes, I remember that—since you speak of it," replied Madame Ruth, passing her hand over her brow. "Go on—I must have been poisoned."

"Yes, Madame, to temporary madness. And you must have continued to eat by bits, or drink by sips, of that which was poisoned. This may have been true for an hour or more. During that time the potency of the poison was accumulating. A very little would not have harmed you. The effect of a very little would soon have passed away. But you continued to imbibe the poison, and at last from being a harmless stimulant it became an active, an instant, a deadly poison, and you either fell suddenly or sank gradually into that cataleptic state in which you were found."

"Adraste Scipian," said Madame Ruth gravely, and regarding him with more respect than she had ever imagined she could regard a Voodoo doctor, "I now have no doubt that I was poisoned. But I am as sure that the poison was not intended for me."

"I do not assert that, Madame," replied Scipian.

"Where found you that vial, Scipian?"

"Presently I will tell you, Madame. You ate, on the night of the first of May, of a dish of sliced and sugared orange, and drank, perhaps, from a flagon of Madeira sangaree, in the bedroom of your grandson, Mr. Adrian Dudley."

"Yes—and it was for him the poison was intended! I know that now," exclaimed Madame Ruth. "You will aid me to detect the poisoner, Scipian," she added eagerly, as she laid her hand upon a purse of white silk on the table. "Take this purse. It contains twenty doubloons. I admit that you have saved my life. I do not value my life at twenty doubloons—I will hereafter give you more—"

"It is more than enough to make a poor Voodoo doctor rich, Madame," said Scipian, as he shuffled to the table with a slow and rheumatic step, and lifted with an eager though trembling hand the well-filled purse from the table.

Madame Ruth was not at the moment looking at him, nor looking at anything. Her eyes were closed, and an expression of horror and dismay was upon her noble and benevolent features. In her heart she was saying:

"Oh, Heaven help me to detect and to punish the criminal! Oh, Adrian, Adrian! who aims to take your life? Can it be your cousin—my grandson Leon de Vargas? God forbid! The hate that burned in the hearts of your fathers—in the hearts of the husbands of my daughters—has it descended from fathers to sons, to culminate in the murder of one of my grandsons by the other? God forbid! But why do I suspect Leon? I have no right, no cause to suspect Leon, except the fact that he and Adrian had a bitter quarrel the other day—a quarrel over a miniature. A miniature of whom? I interrupted the quarrel that was about to be a duel, but neither would permit me to see the miniature. Each claimed it as his. A miniature of some one never seen by either! They admitted that, the two idiots! The miniature of a young girl who may now be an old woman, for I saw at least the case in which it was, and the case was of old and foreign make. What simpletons are the young! Adrian finds a miniature in the forest. Leon sees him pick it up. Leon looks over Adrian's shoulder, sees the painted face, and declares the miniature was lost by him. They dispute. Leon cannot, or will not, tell the name of the original. Adrian will not give up the miniature unless Leon first tells where he, Leon, obtained it. They quarrel about it. As sudden as the lightning's flash they are both in love with the painted face. It is absurd, that thought. It seems impossible, but it is the truth. The hate of their dead fathers for each other flares up in the hearts of the two cousins. They are actually about to fight a duel—they are pacing off to measure a duelling distance, when I, seldom abroad, chance to come upon them. I stop the quarrel, of whose cause I can learn nothing except that each claims an old miniature. I lean to Leon, but I bid Adrian keep the miniature until Leon shall tell where he obtained it. Leon refuses. I demand the miniature from Adrian. He will not give it to me. They are very headstrong young men—"

The tinkling and jingling of the bells tied to Scipian's hair interrupted the troubled meditations of Madame Ruth. She opened her eyes, and saw him standing where he had stood hitherto, bowing and shaking his head.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE WHITE CARNATION.

"He has set his heart upon a white carnation," said Mrs. Lovel, to Michael Munson the florist.

"I'm sorry, ma'am," said old Michael, "but I don't know of a white carnation in town except one down in Straw Lane—the little cottage at the left, just afore you come to the toy factory. Joe Plume works at the toys, and it's his sister Barbara as has the white carnation. I offered her a dollar for it at Easter, but she couldn't part with it. She has rare luck with flowers, has Barbara Plume, for all she has nothin' but a kitchen window to keep 'em in."

Mrs. Lovel's fair brow contracted. What curious complication of fate was it that perpetually threw Barbara Plume across her pathway? But how was old Michael Munson to know that her son Laurence Lovel was the unsuccessful suitor of pretty Barbara, the toymaker's sister? She turned away, folding the rich camel's-hair shawl about her shoulder as she went.

"I will go to this—this working girl," she said. "My little sick boy must not be disappointed."

Nearly at the end of Straw Lane she came to a stand-still, in front of a little cottage, with the sunny window full of flowers. And the centre flower of all was a tall carnation, with nodding plumes of spicy, snowy bloom.

"This is the place," said Mrs. Lovel to herself, as she tapped on the door with her lilac-gloved hand.

Barbara Plume herself came to the door—beautiful Barbara Plume, of whom Mrs. Lovel had heard so much, but whom she had never seen until now.

"You are Mrs. Lovel, I think?" said Barbara, with the self-possession of any society belle.

"Y-yes," admitted Mrs. Lovel, momentarily discomfited, for she herself had intended to have taken the patronizing initiation. "You have a beautiful white carnation there, which I am desirous of purchasing. I will give you two dollars for it?"

Barbara went to her flower-filled window and bent her cheek down against the white perfumed tassels of the royal flower! Her eyes sparkled—two red spots came to her cheeks.

"My carnation," she said, in a low, yet distinct voice. "Wealth will do much, Mrs. Lovel, but it will not buy my carnation away from me."

"You will not sell it?"

"No, madam, I will not sell it."

"Then all I have to say is, that you are an exceedingly foolish girl," said Mrs. Lovel, in a hard, rasping voice. And she went away.

When Joe Plume came home from the toy factory, at noon, to his simple meal of bacon and greens and weak tea, his sister told him the whole story.

"Eh!" said Joe, with his mouth full of greens. "But I misdoubt me, Bab. You've made a mistake."

"I mistake, Joe! Does she think her money will buy *everything?*" Barbara cried, flushing up, and biting her scarlet lower lip.

"Hold hard, little sister—hold hard," said Joe, with a gulp of tea. "It's the poor little sick boy, dying of consumption, as has set his heart, so they say, on a white pink. I wouldn't give *her* not so much as a copper penny; but the poor boy, Bab? *He* an't to blame, is he, because she's his mother? And all her money, Bab, girl, won't bring back the red to *his* cheeks, nor the strength to his withering arms. No, no more it won't."

"I didn't know that, Joe. I didn't know the sick child wanted it, or I wouldn't have spoken quite so sharp. Ask Harry Planer to come round this evening after work hours, won't you?"

Harry Planer came—a tall, well-built young giant, with brown laughing eyes, and a silky brown beard which put young Laurence Lovel's waxed mustache to scorn.

"Well, Barbara."

"I want you to go around to the Lovel house with me, Harry."

Planer's jocund countenance fell.

"Barbara, you never would—"

"No, you goose, no! And you know very well I wouldn't. Only come."

She lifted the white carnation, carefully staked and tied, and the pot enveloped in brown paper wrapping, and gave it into his hands. Harry followed blindly and unremonstrating.

"Take me to the room where the sick boy is," said Barbara, to the servant, as they entered the mansion.

Little George Lovel sat among his pillows, in a bower of flowers and pictures and birds, and his mother was at his side.

Barbara took the flower from Planer's hand, and set it on the stand by George's bed.

"I wouldn't sell it—not for money," she said breathlessly. "But you're kindly welcome to it, dear," with a gentle touch of the child's curly hair, "and I only wish it could bring back health to you."

Little Georgie uttered a cry of delight.

"Oh, mamma! how beautiful! Isn't the pretty lady good?"

So Barbara went back through the twilight with her strong-handed, strong-hearted lover by her side, envying Mrs. Lovel nothing, wealthy though she was.

"For I wouldn't marry that foolish fine gentleman son of hers, Harry, not if he could cover my roof with diamonds," she said earnestly.

"Even if it wasn't for me, Barbara?"

"Even if it wasn't for you, Harry."

And when poor little Georgie Lovel died, he held a stalk of Barbara's white carnation in his hand, and they laid the snowy, fragrant blossoms in his coffin.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A Boston deacon, noted for his politeness, used to "tend gate" at the station of the Worcester Railroad and direct passengers which cars to take to reach their destination. One day a drunken Natick cobbler staggered up to him, and the deacon inquired, with his usual urbanity, where he was going. "Going to Tophet!" was the bluff reply. "Take the next car," mildly said the deacon, "and get off at Natick."

Two travellers from the old country took refuge underneath the bedclothes from a skirmishing party of mosquitos, until, being nearly suffocated, one of them ventured to peep forth, and by chance espied a firefly which had strayed into the room. "We might as well come out, Tom," said he to his companion; "we can't hide any longer, for here's one of the crayters searching for us with a lantern."

"Give me some cold rice," said a guest at a hotel to a black waiter. "There an't none, sah." "Why, what's that on the sideboard, in that dish there?" "Dat, sah, am cole *b'iled* rice. You asked simply for *cole* rice, sah. Please be exact in your language, sah. Shall I gib you some of de *cole b'iled* rice, sah?"

"Unless you give me aid," said a beggar to a benevolent lady, "I am afraid I shall have to resort to something which I should greatly dislike to do." The lady handed him a dollar, and compassionately asked, "What is it, poor man, that I have saved you from?" "Work," was the mournful answer.

"Mamma," said a wee pet, "they sung 'I want to be an angel' in Sunday-school this morning, and I sung with them." "Why, Nelly!" exclaimed mamma, "could *you* keep time with the rest?" "I guess I could," proudly answered little Nelly; "I kept ahead of 'em most all the way through."

Schoolmaster—"Of what does the surface of the earth consist?" *Pupil*—"Of land and water." *Schoolmaster*—"Very well. Now, in order that I may see if you clearly understand the subject, I will vary the question a little. What do land and water make?" *Pupil*—"Mud."

A literary gentleman, a believer in spiritualism, said that he was himself a subject of spiritual influence, under which he always wrote his articles, thus being, in the work of authorship, a medium. "That," remarked a pleasant friend, "may account for your mediocrity."

The people of St. Louis are satirical about the location of their new Post-office. The *Democrat* says, "It is located so far West that we congratulate the Government on having United States troops enough at the arsenal to protect it from Indian depredations."

A city fop who was taking an airing in the country, tried to amuse himself by quizzing an old farmer about his bald head, but was extinguished by the old man, who solemnly remarked, "Young man, when my head gets as soft as yours, I can raise hair to sell."

"Aunt Susan, suppose all the women were in one country, and all the men in another, with a big river between them, and no boats nor bridges, what would be the consequence?" "Good gracious! why, then lots of poor women would be drowned!"

A client calling at his lawyer's office, in which there was a blazing fire, exclaimed, "Why, your office is as hot as an oven!" "Why shouldn't it be?" retorted the lawyer, "since it is here that I make my bread!"

The other day a Montreal tailor sent his bill to a magazine editor. He was startled a few hours afterward by its being returned, with a note appended, saying, "Your manuscript is respectfully declined."

"Now, Johnny," said a pretty teacher to a pupil, can you tell me what is meant by a miracle?" "Yes, ma'am. Mother says if you don't marry our new Principal it will be a miracle."

A Georgia editor, "wishing to restrain himself within the bounds of politeness," informs an opposition candidate for office that he "would be but an average hog in any drove."

Why does a freight car need no locomotive? Because the freight itself makes the cargo.

Why is the figure 9 like a peacock? Because it's 0 (naught) without its tail.

Even the best of the cutlers steel their material.

Nature's tailoring—A potato patch.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A most extraordinary attempt to commit suicide is reported from Sherburne, England. A woman found a man sitting by his kitchen fire, with the nozzle of a pair of bellows lying by his side, and blood issuing from his mouth. She asked him what he had done, and he replied that he had tried to blow his brains out, but had only half done it, as his old head was too thick to blow off. The would-be suicide had been carrying fuses and rock powder about him for some time, and had drilled a hole in the nozzle of the bellows, converting it into a kind of small cannon, loaded it, and inserting it into his mouth, touched it off.

One evening, not long ago, a father and mother in Detroit left their little four-year-old son in the house all alone. The child begged to be taken with them, saying he was afraid of bears and wolves. When they left him he screamed loudly, and on their return they found him to be insane. It is feared he will be an idiot for life. It is strange that some parents cannot learn that it is not only cruel but dangerous to expose a child to the influence of extreme fear.

A strange disease has appeared among the sheep in the vicinity of Knob Noster, Miss. The eye commences to run and swell up; the ball of the eye turns white in the course of a day, and then breaks and discharges. The eye apparently runs out, leaving the socket empty. The second or third day the animal dies.

The first American gas-light company was chartered to light the city of Baltimore in 1816. In 1822 Boston adopted the new method of illumination. The old New York Gas-light Company, which lights the city from Grand street to the Battery, was chartered in 1823. Bristol, R. I., was lighted by gas as early as 1825.

A heavy rise has lately taken place in the price of paper in England. Some of the London newspapers are now paying as much as $2,000 a week more for paper than they were paying in February. The rise is attributed to a combination among a large number of paper-makers.

A Canadian lunatic recently took a child in a skiff, saying he was an angel sent for it, and started down the Niagara river toward the Falls. The father started in pursuit, and overtook the maniac as he was nearing the rapids, and just in time to save his child.

A South Carolina editor says that an official of that State, who has been unable to get his salary for several months, owing to the depletion of the State treasury, recently had to borrow money to pay the tax on his feebly prospective income.

Phebe Schofield, of Richmond, Ind., aged one hundred and nine years, is said to have obtained from the War Department $10,000, being the arrears of pay and pension due her late husband for services performed in the Revolutionary war.

In tearing up the roof of the Court House at Edwardsville, Illinois, the workmen discovered skeletons of pigeons piled up by the hundreds. A defect in the cornice enabled the pigeons to get in, but they were unable to get out again.

A young man employed in a woolen mill in North Providence, was instantly killed on Friday of last week. He was looking down the elevator well, when the elevator came down and caught him and broke his neck.

A school-girl, in Sanilac county, Mich., tried to climb into a school-house through a window, and the sash falling on her neck, and her feet not touching the ground, she was held there and strangled to death.

A man worth a quarter of a million of dollars, and employing one hundred and fifty workmen, was fined $50 in Chicago, the other day, for stealing a case of "bitters" from a store, while he was drunk.

A man living in London, N. H., recently attempted suicide by hanging, but was cut down by his son, whereupon he took the rope and administered a vigorous whipping to every member of his family.

Pleasant News for the English.—Eminent geologists say that England forms the cover of a subterranean well of fire, and is liable at any moment to meet the fate of the district around Vesuvius.

A pauper woman in Vermont recently died at the great age of one hundred and six years. She had been supported by the town longer than its oldest inhabitant—excepting herself—could remember.

A black man, named Whitlock, was killed by a mad ox, near Camden, N. C., as he was attempting to rescue a boy at whom the ox was rushing. The boy escaped with but slight injuries.

PROVEN.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

"Wild and bitter falls the Night,
Hoarse the threatening torrent roars.
Hark! A Traveller cries for Light—
Shall we turn him from our doors?
Bound and helpless, stark and blind,
Where his wandering feet have been,
Rude the perilous pathways wind—
Master, shall we let him in?"

"Dangers compass us around,
Treachery haunts our secret gates."
"Terror reigns, and gloom profound,
Where the trembling pilgrim waits!"
"Journeying from the strangers' court,
Brings he meed of spotless fame?"
"He is vouched of good report:"
"Let him enter in God's name!"

'By the Charity divine,
By the Faith that never dies,
By the Hope whose promised sign
Gemmed Ben Israel's Orient skies,
Yield to him, in love Fraternal,
Mystic Word and helping hand,
Knowledge drawn from founts supernal,
Light to see and understand!

"Lead him unto pleasant places,
South or West, or glowing East;
Clothe him with the kindred graces
That adorn the Master's feast;
Where, in majesty before us,
Wisdom, Strength and Beauty shine;
And in radiance arching o'er us,
Hope uplifts her covenant sign:

"Where, though fair or foul the weather,
Brothers linked to stand or fall,
We in concord dwell together,
Waiting for the Master's call;
Till each way-worn traveller faring
Through the rugged Vale of Death,
Hears Angelic lips declaring
The Eternal *Shibboleth!*"

◆

MARK HEBER'S LUCK;

OR,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE RESULT OF THE CHASE.

The crisis was pressing. There was no time for either Mark Heber or Gay to give utterance to the joy and relief which flamed up in the souls of both. One Indian lay dead upon the ground near them, killed by Gay's own hand. The other savage had fled toward the Indian camp. He was at that very moment speeding thither, fired with hatred and revenge. He would find a score of warriors about to set out upon their search through the woods; he would tell his story; he would lead Blue Jack and his followers directly to the hiding-place of the young fugitives!

Not a moment was to be wasted. Action—prompt, decisive action, alone could save them.

There was scarcely time even for deliberation. In one instant, as it seemed, Mark Heber canvassed his chances of escape. He could not flee up the river, and so make of himself and Gay targets for the shots and arrows of the enemy. He could only plunge deeper into the forest.

"Come!" he said. "To the horses! We must mount and be off!"

He bounded toward the little glade where the horses were in waiting. Gay sprang after him as lightly as a fawn. Mark unfastened the horses and put Gay into her saddle. Then he leaped upon his own horse, seized her bridle strap, and struck out boldly into the tangled depths of the forest.

Gay had not spoken since her first impulsive outcry in the very moment of her rescue by Mark. She was pale as death, but her small face was bright with her dauntless heroism. Her glowing eyes were full of a fearless light. Her very aspect nerved Mark and encouraged him, giving him new strength and vigor. In the face of the terrible peril menacing them, he realized how much he loved her.

"Oh, thank God!" she murmured now softly, under her breath. "Thank God, dear Mark, you came just in time. A minute later—"

She shuddered, unable to finish the sentence.

Mark knew what she would have said. A minute later she would have been dead, or a captive with death in immediate prospect.

"Yes, thank God!" echoed Mark, starting nervously and peering through the shadows. "It's three miles to the camp, Gay. That fellow is not half way there. There may be a chance for us yet!"

He struck the horses sharply, and they pushed forward, crashing through bushes and underbrush, their ears pricked up, as if the animals scented danger.

"Which way are we going, Mark?"

"To the eastward. There is only an open plain to the west and south, and it is alive with Indians. We've a desperate ride before us. But their horses may be as tired as our own, or even more so, as ours have rested longer. If we can keep out of their way until night, we may escape again in the darkness. That is about our only chance," he added, with desperate frankness. "Would that we could keep out of their clutches until night!"

"Ah, if we only can!" breathed Gay.

They rode forward as briskly as the nature of the ground and the obstacles in the shape of the forest undergrowth would permit. Mark looked back. Their trail was plainly visible. Broken twigs and bushes marked their course. To the Indians, whose keen eyes not even a fluttering leaf can escape, the path would be as plainly marked as a beaten highway. Mark set his teeth firmly together as he noticed the fact. There was no help for it, however. They must ride for their lives, let their trail be what it would. There was as yet no sound of pursuit.

"The savage is about arriving at the camp," said Mark. "We shall be some three or four miles ahead of our pursuers, Gay. Perhaps five miles. We need not lose our courage."

"No, we want it now," returned Gay calmly.

"You killed that Indian, Gay?"

"Yes, I shot him. Oh, Mark, it's a terrible thing to deprive a human being of life—"

"I'd like the chance, if the human being were only Blue Jack," said Mark, again setting his teeth hard together. "While he lives, there is no safety for you, Gay. I heard him plotting with an English speaking half-breed. He said you must be killed—that he hated you."

"There's no love lost between us," said Gay coolly. "That's all nonsense about his being my father, Mark. I've got new light upon the subject. He knows who I am, and I'm in his way somehow, but he is not my father. If he was, I'd repudiate him," and her big brown eyes flashed.

Mark urged on the horses, sending back frequent glances over his shoulder. The reaction from his great excitement and horror was beginning to set in. He trembled as with ague.

"My brave little Gay!" he said, his passionate young voice quivering. "I did not dream of your possible peril until I heard Blue Jack speak of two Indian hunters who had gone up the east bank of the river. How nearly I had come to losing you! How long had the savages been there when I came?"

"I don't know, Mark. It seemed an age. It must have been ten minutes, perhaps fifteen or twenty. I was lying in the thicket— What's that, Mark?"

It was only the call of some forest bird, loud and shrill and high, above their heads.

"I was lying in the thicket," continued Gay, in a breathless sort of voice, listening between her words, "wakeful, thinking of you, Mark, and terribly anxious. I thought it was time for you to come back. I was afraid you had fallen into some trouble. I wondered you were gone so long. I was full of terrors. In the midst of them a deer came crashing through the thicket where I lay hid, and bounded past me to the river. I sprang up in alarm. And then I saw an Indian in full chase of the deer. He was alone. He came bounding also toward the thicket. He saw me suddenly, and gave a yell and drew his tomahawk. He meant to kill me. I read his purpose in his eyes. And, Mark, it was no time to think. I drew my revolver as he neared me and shot him. He gave a great spring in the air and fell to the ground dead!"

"My brave little Gay!" repeated Mark passionately. "You did nobly. The Indian would have killed you, if you had not killed him."

"I stood chilling with horror at my own deed," said Gay, in little gasps, the words seeming jolted from her mouth by the motion of her horse. "It's awful to take life, Mark—to send a soul into eternity—to look at a being who was all life at one moment, and who the next lies stark and dead, killed by one's own hand! I—I said a prayer for him in my own heart. And then I had no further time for thought or regret, for there came again a crashing in the bushes, and the other Indian came leaping toward me."

"And then?" cried Mark.

"He saw his dead comrade—he saw me! His yell still rings in my ears. He fired at me. I returned his shot. Both missed. Oh, Mark, it may seem odd, but I asked Heaven to help me, and I fired a third time. He rushed upon me, and I had not time to fire again before he seized the hand that held my revolver. He secured the pistol and dragged me away, and his tomahawk swung above my head. I gave myself up for dead. Then your voice came through the awful horror calling my name. I started and tried to scream. The savage held his big hand over my mouth and crouched low to the ground. Then you came and saved me. Oh, Mark, Mark, what's that?"

Gay turned half way in her saddle and listened intently.

A far-off sound, muffled and faint by reason of the distance it traversed, was heard with indistinctness—but still heard—the yells of the pursuers.

"It is probably the Indians who are dashing after us like mad this side of our late halting-place," said Mark. "We must have travelled several miles, Gay, but if our course had been direct we should not hear their shouts even dimly. Great Heaven! Can we be travelling in a great circle?"

"Oh, no, no," cried Gay, looking upward through the waving tree-tops. "See the sun, Mark. We are going south-east, I should say, but we are not returning to the river."

Mark bent from his saddle and broke off a small sapling as he passed. With this he struck his horses, and they leaped forward with increased energy.

A few minutes later, they came out into a beaten path that led to the eastward. It was an old Indian trail, a mere bridle-path, but Mark hailed its discovery with joy. There were no bushes in the pathway, but its sides were closely lined with trees and bushes. Progress here would be much more rapid than in the dense forest.

The horses seemed to appreciate the change. They galloped on swiftly. Neither of the young fugitives spoke for some time. The very air seemed full of danger for them.

When it became necessary to allow the horses to walk, Gay took out her revolver and loaded it. She hid it in her bosom. Mark examined his weapons, putting them in readiness for instant use.

The wild flight was kept up for two or three hours, with occasional intervals of slackened speed to permit the horses to rest; but when the sun had become mid-high in the heavens, and the horses began to show signs of exhaustion, Mark grew yet more anxious.

"We shall have to stop somewhere soon," he said. "The horses won't stand much more, Gay."

"They want water," said Gay compassionately. "They are reeking with sweat. How hard they breathe! How red their nostrils are! There's one comfort, Mark. We don't even hear our pursuers. And if our horses are exhausted, how tired theirs must be! Perhaps they are still a good five miles behind us."

"This path leads to the southward," said Mark abruptly, looking at the sun. "It must have taken a turn back there which we were in too great haste to notice. It may be as well. I should not dare go too far to the eastward, for fear of encountering Sioux, or Poncas, or Pawnees. The Pawnees sometimes come up so far as this, if they are in pursuit of game, or bent on war with the other tribes. The Pawnees, you know, are near our own settlement at the two rivers, but they never made us any trouble. I hope, though, we shall encounter none of them."

The horses drooped their heads and no longer obeyed the whip. They were tired, and Mark Heber comprehended the necessity of giving them rest if he intended to exact further service of them. They had travelled all night and all the forenoon, with the exception of about two hours' rest.

"We might have ridden them all day," said Mark, "with but one brief rest, if we had not been obliged to fly at full gallop. It's the pace that kills, as the old saying goes. The horses have used up enough energy this forenoon to have lasted them all day. We must take the risk, Gay, and give them water and ten minutes' rest."

They rode on gloomily and anxiously. In the course of half an hour they came to a thin brook of clear water which crossed the road. The horses rushed out into the stream, and drank the water eagerly. When they had swallowed all it was prudent to allow them, Mark lifted Gay from her saddle and set her upon the shore. Then he took up a dry stick and commenced scraping the horses' flanks and legs of the lather, and their necks also. With dry leaves which Gay brought to him he rubbed them.

This necessary rest, however, did not occupy ten minutes, during which Gay assisted Mark, and also kept watch.

They mounted again, and pursued their journey.

Mark produced food from the saddle-bags on Gay's horse, and they divided it between them, and ate as they rode.

About an hour after leaving the brook, the Indian trail, which still led to the southward, came out upon the open plain. The bright sunlight on the treeless prairie after the gloom of the forest fairly dazzled the eyes of the young fugitives. They halted in the edge of the forest, and looked about them in dismay.

Not a human being was to be seen upon the plains. In the distance Mark detected a herd of buffaloes, and nearer he saw deer and antelopes, but there were no Indians in sight.

"We have come to the end of the forest," said Gay. "What are we to do, Mark? I dare not venture on the plains. Dare you? It seems as if these trees gave us some protection. They at least afford us a shade from the sun."

"They hide us from our pursuers. But look yonder, Gay," and Mark pointed to the southward. "It's all an open plain now to the east and west, but a mile to the south is another stretch of forest. We must make for it. Once under cover of the trees, we can perhaps evade the Indians until night, and then escape in the darkness."

Gay looked in the direction in which he pointed. A mile away to the southward lay another great forest. Its shadows seemed impenetrable.

"We must break for it," said Mark. "The pursuers may be near us. They must have divided into several parties, and one party may have struck out in this direction, with the view to cut off our retreat."

Gay uttered an exclamation of alarm, as she looked back upon the trail by which they had come.

"I—I thought I saw an Indian in the path," she gasped. "He went back—"

"It was my words alarmed you," said Mark, after a keen scrutiny. "I see no Indian, Gay. But I think we shall see them soon, if their horses have endurance enough to get here. We must take the risk of breaking across the strip of prairie for the other wood. To remain in this forest is to await certain capture. The Indians have no doubt spread out like a fan, some of them going to the north-east, some to the south-east, and some following in our very tracks. We shall be caught if we remain here in the edge of this forest, and of course we can't turn back. Come now, Gay!"

He grasped her bridle-rein closer, and boldly broke from their cover, setting out at a gallop to cross the plain to the opposite forest.

They had not gone twenty rods, when a chorus of Indian yells was heard in the distance behind them, and a dozen mounted savages, with Blue Jack at their head, burst out from the shelter of the trees not an eighth of a mile distant, and came after them in swift pursuit.

Gay Heber was right. She had seen an Indian in the pathway, as she had thought. He had retreated on catching sight of her, and had galloped back to communicate his discovery to his comrades. They had guessed the intention of the young fugitives, and had turned from the trail, bursting through the underbrush and gaining the open plain in time to see the fugitives break from the forest.

As Mark had surmised, Blue Jack had divided his followers into three parties, with instructions to fairly scour the forest. With Lenno, and a half-score of others, he had gone to the south-east with the hope of intercepting the flight of the young pair. Knowing the forest perfectly, he had cut short the distance, and had arrived as we have stated, and with his horses in a comparatively fresh condition.

The joy of the savages and their leader was beyond description.

The alarm of Mark and Gay was mingled with despair.

"Fast as you can, and make yourself as small as possible," cried Mark.

Gay bowed her head low upon the withers of her horse, clinging with her hands to his neck, and gathering her limbs into the smallest space possible.

Mark gave a great cut to Gay's horse and to his own, and then cast his glances rapidly around him, in quest of some sign of help or point of refuge. The two animals fled in a fierce gallop.

Neither of the fugitives spoke.

On came the Indians in wild pursuit.

Mark measured the distance to the forest ahead with one swift glance.

"Courage, Gay!" he cried, and struck the horses again with all his strength.

The young girl breathed hard, and clung to her steed with utter desperation. Every nerve was strained to keep her from falling. Her hands were almost clinched in her horse's mane and neck.

"Hang on!" shouted Mark. "We're half way over."

And Gay hung on, her brain reeling, her body one great throbbing pulse, all her strength centred in her hands and feet.

Mark lifted his head and looked back.

The Indians seemed gaining. They were hallooing, after their usual custom, and their yells seemed to excite their horses to the last burst of speed.

Taking the hint, Mark lashed the horses a third time with the broken sapling, and yelled in their ears in a manner that goaded them to madness. They let out a burst of unlooked-for speed.

"Three-fourths of the way over!" gasped Mark. "Courage, Gay. Once under cover—"

A dozen rifle shots rang out on the still air, coming from the pursuers.

Gay's horse, the length of his rope behind, dropped in his tracks. The girl leaped off and rolled over on the grass unhurt. A great yell of exultation came from the savages.

In a moment Gay was on her feet again, flying toward Mark. He stopped his panting steed, leaned over, caught up the girl's springing figure, and seated her before him on the horse. Then they resumed their flight.

The brief delay had been fatal. The Indians still came on furiously, and were now so near at hand that escape seemed no longer possible. Mark sent a wild glance ahead. The forest was very near. They were almost in the shade of its tall outer trees.

Another discharge of bullets from the rifles of the Indians, and Mark's horse staggered. He had been wounded in the [illegible] utterly disabled.

The young man caught the girl in his arms and leaped to the ground. The movement was just in time, the horse falling upon his side the next instant. Mark and Gay, hand in hand, fled toward the forest.

The distance between them and the pursuers was now inconsiderable. Another discharge of bullets occurred, but they were intended to intimidate the fugitives, and purposely sent wide of the mark. Blue Jack did not dare fire openly upon Gay Heber, since Lenno her Indian lover was at his side, full of eagerness to recover his intended bride. All the other savages sympathized with the dandy brave, and Blue Jack must have aroused their anger had he fired upon Gay. They wished also to take Mark Heber alive, to put him to the torture, in revenge for the lives he had cost them.

They closed in now upon the fugitives with startling celerity.

Suddenly Gay's foot caught in the tangled grass. Before she could recover herself, even with Mark's aid, a half dozen of the savages dashed fiercely down upon them.

Mark turned at bay. Blue Jack leaped from his horse, bounded forward, and caught the girl in his arms. One of the Indians hurled himself upon Mark. The latter drew his revolver, retreating instinctively, and shot his assailant. He was already in the edge of the forest, in the cool shadow. Most of the Indians were still mounted. Gay was a captive. Mark had no time to think. His first impulse was to die with Gay. But she was not yet dead. There was a faint chance that she might be saved. He turned again, and darted into the wood, his second impulse being one of faith in himself and hope in his future.

All of the Indians save Lenno, who chose to remain beside Gay, dismounted and ran in pursuit.

Mark chose the deepest shadows of the heavy wood, and fled on like the wind. Haggard and panting, he looked about him for some hiding-place. For some minutes he thus pressed on half blindly, one great horror possessing his soul, and then he suddenly perceived just ahead of him a great hollow oak-tree, the aperture in the side of which was covered with thick vines.

Mark dashed aside the vines and plunged into the hollow heart of the tree. He sank down trembling, his ears alive to every sound. The leaves that screened him had scarcely ceased fluttering when his Indian pursuers dashed past him, continuing their way into the depths of the forest. A startled deer had crashed past in the distance, just out of sight, although within hearing, thus calling the attention of the pursuers beyond Mark's hiding-place, and for the present he was safe. His escape in both instances had been providential, but he had no thought for himself.

"Blue Jack will not dare to kill Gay openly," he thought, in a growing calmness. "Lenno will protect her. The Devil Chief can only hope to kill Gay secretly, when no one else is by to prevent him. They have not done with me yet," and his eyes blazed. "I will rescue Gay, or I will horribly avenge her! Life is valueless to me without her. I will die with her, but I will not die without having sent Blue Jack into the other world before me! My last stroke shall be my best stroke. I'll die fighting!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A SURPRISE AHEAD FOR BLUE JACK.

The search for Mark Heber proved unsuccessful.

It was continued for hours with more or less zeal, but was at last relinquished, the savages returning to their leader.

Blue Jack and Lenno, with their young captive, were awaiting them in the cool shade in the edge of the forest. The horses, all picketed, were cropping the green herbage. The countenance of the Devil Chief fell as the savages approached him. He looked in vain for Mark Heber.

"Where is the boy?" he demanded gruffly.

"We do not know," said one of the Indians, speaking for the rest, and employing his own language. "He's spry as a squirrel. He's gone!"

"Gone!" repeated Blue Jack blankly.

"The youth is a favorite of the Great Spirit," said another Indian, "or else the big Devil protects him. We tracked him into the wood and lost him. We searched every hollow, every thicket, even the branches of the trees above us, but we could not find him."

"It's the fellow's luck!" cried Blue Jack. "Curse him! He slips out of every trouble like a greased eel. I'll be the death of him yet. We'll find whose favorite he is. I never hated a person in my life as I hate him. I swear I'll never know a moment's peace till I've killed him!"

"What are we to do?" asked Lenno.

"We'll camp here. This is the place I appointed to meet the other parties. We've had a partial success—we've got the girl."

He smiled, as if he found that sufficient satisfaction.

Gay Heber was bound hand and foot, and half reclining on the grass, propped up against a tree. She had not shed a tear nor uttered a complaint since she had fallen into the hands of her enemy. Blue Jack had hurled invectives at her in English, but he had not dared to wreak his vengeance upon her, as he longed to do, because Lenno hovered at her side, reproaching her and making love to her all in a breath. It was plain that Lenno suspected Blue Jack's enmity toward Gay, and that he was determined to protect her.

Gay did not understand the speeches of the returning savages, but she did understand their disappointment. The first emotion she had shown since her capture now moved her features. A great joy and gratitude glowed in her face and filled her young soul.

Blue Jack turned upon her sharply.

"Your pretended brother has deserted you," he said gruffly. "There's a gallant protector for you. He's looked out for himself, and left you to perish."

"No perish!" said Lenno, frowning. "Lenno great brave. Lenno nephew of great chief Yako. Lenno loves the pale-faced girl, and will marry her."

There was a sullen anger in the tones of the Indian dandy that warned Blue Jack that he was treading upon dangerous ground. He made haste to retreat.

"The Devil Chief likes Lenno," he said. "It shall be as Lenno says. Lenno does not understand all the meaning of the Devil Chief when he speaks in the white man's tongue. The heart of the Devil Chief is good toward his red brother."

Lenno grunted assent, but there was still suspicion in his keen eyes.

Blue Jack flung himself upon the ground at his prisoner's feet, and Lenno did the same.

There was a stream of clear water near, the same at which the young fugitives had watered their horses hours before, in the forest. The horses were within range of the stream, and the men went down and drank, and lay down in the shade on its bank and slept.

Blue Jack and Lenno were wakeful, and kept close guard over their young captive.

In the course of an hour the party which had followed upon the direct trail of the fugitives rode up. They also picketed their horses and lay down upon the ground.

The afternoon was now nearly spent. About sunset the party that had gone to the north-east, and had made a circuit of the forest, appeared in sight. They were led by Inoway, and were making straight for the camp.

Gay Heber trembled at the multitude of her enemies. Many of the savages peered in her face until Lenno roughly sent them away, and flung over her head her soiled and torn apron which she had worn since leaving the settlement.

Inoway and his small band came up and joined the camp.

Fires were lighted, and an air of festivity reigned. Two of the Indians whose horses were completely rested, mounted, and went out on a hunt. They returned in the course of an hour with a young buffalo which they had shot. The fire was heaped up anew, and the red [illegible] flashed high in the [illegible] shadows of evening.

Gay Heber, still bound and helpless, lay outside the circle of savages, and just beyond the glare of the light, in the shadow of a great tree. Lenno was beside her, as was also the half-breed lad, Lem., who had first betrayed Gay into the hands of her enemies.

Blue Jack walked gloomily to and fro, the shadow of the crime he meditated making his discolored face more than ever hideous.

His guilty fears stalked before him, inviting him on to murder. He felt that he should never know peace while Gay Heber lived. Even were she the wife of Lenno, he would not be safe. He had learned enough of Mark Heber to know that he would make every effort to rescue Gay from her captivity, and he, Blue Jack, could not be always at her side to guard her. He said to himself that she must die.

"The truth is," he muttered, "that if she were actually dead, I could then claim my wife's property. I could convey the proofs of her death to the Governor, and he'd give in at last. He could have no excuse for withholding the property from me. If she were dead, I'd get together the proofs that Gay Heber was really and truly Gabrielle Kent, granddaughter of Governor Kent, and that she is dead and her mother is dead! Then I'd go to Omaha, get my daughter—my beautiful Isabel—and start for the East. I must manage it."

He was in the midst of his sinister meditations, which had grown into formidable resolves, stern and immutable as fate, when a loud outcry was heard from the sentinel at the southern side of the camp.

A small party of horsemen were seen approaching from the southward. They came on slowly, in evident doubt of the character of those at the encampment.

The Devil Chief ordered one of his warriors to mount and go forth to meet the advancing party, and ascertain their character and intentions.

"It may be a party of Poncas," he said, "or of Pawnees. In the latter case, there will be a fight. Or it may be the party I sent out early this morning upon the trail of the Ponca hunters. Or, again," he added, with a start, "it may be the party that went south under Red Adder and Burk to attack a wagon train. It's time they came up, if they are not burdened with stock, and this is about the longitude they would be in. But there are not more than half a dozen in yonder party."

The Indian scout went forth to meet the advancing party, which was now seen to consist principally of savages. The scout rode up to them without halting to parley, and immediately set out on his return, accompanied by a horseman in half-savage dress, the others continuing to advance at a walk.

As the member of the new party rode into the firelight, he was seen to be Burk.

Blue Jack advanced to meet him, with outstretched hand.

"You're prompt, Burk," he exclaimed. "But what has happened to you? There are not over seven or eight in your party yonder. Have you been whipped out?"

"Not quite, Cap'n," responded Burk. "The rest are driving up cattle. Red Adder and three or four more of us have come on ahead. We've got two prisoners—regular nobs. They're rich as Crœsus—tiptop big bugs!"

"Prisoners, eh?" said Blue Jack. "That's foolish, Burk. Better have let the men scalp 'em. I don't believe in taking prisoners. Seen any soldiers?"

"Only at Fort Kearney. They're full of the exploits of Blue Jack there. Lieutenant Fallon's getting well, and so is the conductor you stabbed. It's all over the country about the attack on the two-river settlement, and I would advise you not to be seen on that route for the present unless you're pretty well disguised."

"I have made the country pretty hot, that's certain," said Blue Jack, laughing. "I'm thinking of taking a trip east, if I can only get rid of a little matter now on my mind."

"Is the girl here—Gay Heber?" asked Burk, peering around him, and into the shadows of the adjacent forest.

"Yes; she's yonder. She escaped last night from the village with the aid of young Heber, who must have travelled all the way up from the two-river settlement to rescue her. He's free now, but she's helpless among the trees yonder, guarded by Mishko the half-breed. Seen anything of Heber? He must have legged it down in a southerly direction."

"No, we've seen nothing of him, but we've heard of him," said Burk grimly. "He's bound to exterminate us, Cap'n, if he's left loose. He killed Pringle, I'll swear to that. And now he's killed Pegger, one of our best men. And he wounded Rube so that he died on the way, and we picked up Ike day before yesterday on his way here, his horse lame and himself half starved. He's out yonder, coming up with the men."

Blue Jack scowled. The loss of his white allies affected him sorely.

"I'll settle that fellow's hash for him!" he growled.

"I'll bet you gold-dust you won't, Cap'n," said Burk. "As Rube said, it's Heber's luck, and I jine with him. If 'twa'n't luck, he'd been dead long afore this. He's one of them that's born to slip out of trouble, and to come 'right side up with care' after every fall. You can no more kill Mark Heber than you can kill a cat. His luck makes me nervous. I begin to think the bullet is made that's to put my light out, and perhaps one is ready for you too, Cap'n. I'm afraid of that young catamount, that's what I am."

"You needn't be. He's travelling south as fast as his legs 'll carry him," said Blue Jack. "He'll fetch up at some fort after a month's travel, if he isn't eaten up by some wandering party of Indians, or if I don't pursue him and overtake him. But I'll be on his tracks in the morning. He's afoot, and he can't travel far.'

"Yes, Cap'n," said Burk; "but here comes my party, with the prisoners—"

"Curse your prisoners!" interrupted Blue Jack. "Haven't I had enough of prisoners? If Gay Heber had been killed at the outset, I'd have been spared plenty of trouble. Put your prisoners alongside the girl; see that they are bound hand and foot; picket your horse, and then come back to me."

Burk hastened to obey. He went back to his party, who were now within a few rods of the camp, assisted Governor Kent and Isabel Holley to dismount, and with the aid of some of the savages conveyed them to the dusky shadows in the edge of the wood, depositing them beside Gay Heber.

Governor Kent regarded the slender figure of Gay, whose face he could not see in the darkness, with compassionate interest. He was not so absorbed in his own troubles as to be oblivious to those of another.

"Another prisoner?" he asked.

"Yes," said Burk shortly. "Sit down here. There you are. Mishko, fasten this man to the tree here. Miss, sit down," addressing Isabel Holley. "You'd better give in and be sensible. I'm sick to death of your whining. Ha'n't heard nothing else since I took you away from the train."

Miss Holley sat down, and Burk saw that her bonds were secure, and he tied her also to the tree. The three prisoners, Gay Heber, Governor Kent and Isabel Holley, were within a few feet of each other, and all in the darkness of the forest, quite out of the circle of light made by the fires.

"Now, Mishko, you guard the whole of them," said Burk, addressing the young half-breed. "Keep your eye peeled. If this young woman yells, just you take off her scalp," he added fiercely, the words and tone being meant for the especial intimidation of Miss Holley, and by no means in earnest.

Burk had thoroughly lost his patience where his fair captive was concerned, and hated her most cordially.

The young lady believed him in earnest, and moaned:

"Oh, you horrid brute! Don't touch me. I'll yell. Oh, is there no law in this awful country? My father will punish you all for this. He'll bring troops—he'll kill every Indian in [illegible] brute! Oh, I wish I'd stayed at Omaha!"

"I wish you had," said Burk, quite exasperated. "You've done nothing but yawp, yawp since I first laid hands on you. If you'll take my advice and save your scalp, you'll shut that mouth o' your'n. Better not let the Cap'n hear you."

"Is—is Blue Jack here?" gasped Miss Holley.

"Yes, he is, backed by forty or fifty Injuns!"

"Oh that awful outlaw!" breathed Miss Holley. "I shall die! I know I shall! O dear! O dear! If papa only knew of my danger! Oh, I wish I were dead! I wish I were at Omaha! Oh, I can't face that wicked outlaw who kills people for the very pleasure of it!"

She began to weep piteously.

Burk cursed her and returned to Blue Jack, who was seated on the ground, eating a choice morsel of roasted buffalo.

"What's the row among your prisoners, Burk?" he asked leisurely.

"She's the devil and all," said Burk. "She's been a perfect cat since I took her. I wish to goodness that some one would scalp her and end her eternal yawp. I'd never have brought her if she hadn't said her father was rich, and I thought he'd fork over handsomely to get her back."

"He's probably glad to get rid of her," said Blue Jack. "We'll have to marry her off to some one of the braves. Perhaps Lenno might like her in place of Gay. Get some meat, Burk, and pitch in."

Burk procured his portion, and sat down gloomily to eat it.

"I'm surprised that you brought any prisoners," said Blue Jack. "If they don't amount to anything, we don't want them. If they are people of consequence, the government may make a row."

"No, it won't," said Burk. "Government's got enough to do to manage the war now on hand. These people are no relation to each other. One's a rich eastern man, the other's a rich western girl. The man is—"

A savage approached at this moment with another choice morsel upon the end of a stick, presenting it to Blue Jack, who took it, stick and all.

"Never mind who the man is," said Blue Jack. "I can tell that for myself after a minute's talk with him. But you oughtn't to have brought him up here. Better have left him, unless the Indians had insisted on bringing captives. How nice this meat is. It isn't like you to be taking prisoners, Burk, but we can dispose of them—in one way or another," and he smiled grimly.

"You can wait and see for yourself, Cap'n," said Burk, somewhat offended. "I was going to tell you—but never mind. You can find out, I suppose."

Blue Jack did not appear to hear the last sentence. He finished his repast, picked his teeth, and lay back on the grass. The savages around him finished their meal, and gathered around the fire on the grass. Presently the outlaw chief started up and exclaimed pettishly:

"Do hear that woman whine! Bring your prisoners here, Burk. I'll scare that woman out of a year's growth. Bring them before me."

Burk started up and hastened toward his prisoners. He loosened the fetters on their feet and removed the straps that confined them to the trees, and led them toward the Devil Chief, who started up to receive them.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

◆

—A giant mind may be held in suspense, but that suspense must be brief, and the action which follows it will be more decided and energetic in consequence of that detention; just as a stream rushes with greater force for a temporary obstruction.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 1872.

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Can Legislators Afford to be Honest?

Everybody wants legislation to be honest. Every one feels that the corrupt system which prevails, of passing laws for pay, and defeating other laws for pay, is dangerous to public liberty. It is said, on all hands, that in this matter we must have a reform.

Now there is one consideration bearing on this subject which seems to be left out of view in discussing it. We refer to the disproportion of the small pay of legislators to their heavy expenditures.

We doubt whether there is one State in the Union where a man can live, at the capital, respectably, on the pay which he receives as a member of the legislature.

It is manifest, therefore, that if a poor man goes to the State Legislature, he must live meanly, or run in debt, or accept bribes.

Of course it is better for men to live ever so poorly—it is better even for them to starve—than to be dishonest. But is it reasonable for us to expect quite so much from human nature? Is it right for us to adhere to a system which requires so much?

It is not best to continue the pay of legislators so small that none but those who have other means of support can afford to participate in making our laws. It frequently happens that the men best qualified for office are dependent upon their daily pay for their support.

If we want our Representatives and Senators to be honest, let us deal honestly by them, and pay them a sufficient compensation to remove them from the sharp temptation of pecuniary want.

◆

Hypocritical Declinations—Mr. Colfax's Defeat.

We are glad that Mr. COLFAX was defeated at Philadelphia; we care nothing politically for his defeat; but we are pleased for the reason that whenever politicians affect to decline a nomination for public office, *we like to see the people take them at their word.*

A long time ago, even before the Presidential campaign was opened, Mr. COLFAX gave notice that he should not be a candidate for re-election as Vice-President. Thereupon General HENRY WILSON—a good man—intimated to his friends a willingness to run for the office. When he began to loom up quite prominently, however, Mr. COLFAX reconsidered his determination, and entered the lists once more.

We rejoice that he has been rejected. We had no confidence in his sincerity when he declined; and the event has justified our suspicions.

A man has never any right to complain at being taken at his word; and as Mr. COLFAX chews the cud of bitter disappointment, he may reflect that he has himself to thank for it.

◆

A Mexican's Revenge.

Corsican vengeance has become proverbial; but the Mexicans are developing a talent in that line which bids fair to cast the *vendetta* of Corsica into the shade.

A ranchero named Miguel, living near Zacatecas, many years ago killed a man named Realjo in a duel. Realjo left a widow and one son about eight years of age. Miguel had a little daughter aged four years. Time passed on; the boy Realjo grew to be a man, and the little daughter of Miguel grew to be a woman. Finally the widow of the slain man died, leaving young Realjo alone in the world. He then set about avenging his father's death, a purpose which it seems he had cherished from childhood. He first poisoned the daughter and wife of Miguel, and then waylaid the latter—whom he thought to take unarmed—told him what he had done and why he had done it, and concluded by informing the bereaved husband and father that *his* time had also come, and bade him prepare to die. But Miguel, instead of preparing to die, suddenly drew a stiletto, rushed upon Realjo before the latter could fire upon him, and plunged the steel into his heart. The poisoner fell to the earth, and with his last breath boasted of his success in at least partly avenging the death of his father who had been killed so many years before, and died with a smile of mingled triumph and hatred upon his lips.

◆

A Novel and Just Judgment.

A few weeks ago, an English lady was obliged to pay four pounds ($20) as damages for having given a good "character" to a servant whom she knew to be unfaithful. Her written recommendation of the servant enabled the latter to get a place which she could not have obtained without the recommendation, and in which she proved unfaithful and detrimental to the lady who employed her; and it was on the proof of these facts that the damages were adjudged by the court.

This judgment seems to us to be as just as it is novel. No one has a right to certify to the trustworthiness of a person whom he knows to be untrustworthy; and whosoever issues a false certificate of character, knowing it to be false, ought to be held responsible for the consequences.

◆

How Did He Care for Them?

[From the Indianapolis Journal.]

He played with the boys sometimes, and I think was fonder of snowballing than any other game. For girls, *as* girls, he never manifested any preference.—*Parton's Life of Greeley.*

If he didn't care for girls *as* girls, will Mr. Parton be good enough to explain upon what ground he cared for them at all. Most young men care for girls only *as* girls. They wouldn't give a cent for a girl *as* a boy, or *as* anything but a girl.

TOO FAST, OR TOO SLOW?

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Too fast, or too slow, which is the worse?

If it is a note coming due, or a dearly loved friend leaving you, or a child sinking sick, or a bush of roses at its height of bloom, or the strawberry season, or a rare bird flying out of the tree before you can examine it, or the coming home of Aunt Jerusha just as a young lover has gushed forth the acknowledgment, or the school bell when boys are out at play, or a shooting star which you run out to look at, or the coming on of old-age—all these are too quick—a world too quick.

But when one considers the miseries of too slow, the balance wavers. When you have a fever and ask for water; when you are waiting for a friend with only five minutes before the train starts; or when a rich uncle who has made his will in your favor, is incredibly slow in going to heaven; or when you are waiting for the morning twilight after a weary night; or when on Sunday night, in New England, you and Julia are waiting for the old folks to go to bed—good old folks, who forget their own courting days, and seem to enjoy the society of young people so much!

But these and a thousand other like slownesses are not to be compared with the slowness of a sermon in hot weather. The minister begins slow, and, like a clock running down, goes slower and slower every tick, and yet, unlike the clock, will not stop! Is it wicked for boys and girls to play in church? Is it wrong for folks to go to sleep? Is there no defence to be allowed against such a deliberate attack on patience and grace? Has the pew no rights which the pulpit is bound to respect?

Did you ever find yourself shut up by politeness, by interest, by necessity, to hear one tell her infirmities and sicknesses, when she fell sick, how it happened, what were the medicines, how they acted, what the neighbors said, a comparison of this case with other ones in the neighborhood? The nauseous conversation drips, drips along for an hour; is resumed, repeated, begun again—never ended!

What an example to irritable and nervous men is the ox! Behold a hundred flies sucking his blood. He stands with eyes half shut chewing his cud—now and then listlessly swinging his tail, he disturbs the swarm, but they settle again, along his flank, all up and down his legs, and the imperturbable creature is as patient as a mother. Oh that we could be as forbearing with dullards, or with sharp meddlers!

We abhor the maxim, *Make haste slowly.* It is all on the side of dawdling men whose time is of no use to them, and who regard your time as valueless.

"Good-morning, sir," says a stranger, calling just at a moment of enthusiasm, when you could dash off a dozen pages of matter.

"Good-morning," say I.

"Fine weather."

"Yes, sir."

"We have had quite a spell of it."

"Yes, sir."

Quite a pause, in which he looks you all over.

"Not quite so old a man as I expected to see."

"Ah?"

Another pause, in which he surveys the room, furniture, books, etc. I say nothing; he says nothing. I look at my watch. He says:

"A fine watch you carry, sir?"

I say, "Have you any special business that I can assist you in?"

"Well—not much. Had heard so much about you that I thought I'd like to see you; you know that's natural. I told my wife, afore I come down to New York, I meant to. She'll be glad to hear about it. Well—I 'spose your time is valuable—"

You think him not such a bore, after all—only ten minutes; but he gets up and talks five minutes before he starts, and five more at the parlor door, and five more at the outside door, and comes back and rings the bell to say that he left his umbrella, and explains

Is murder wicked under all circumstances?

◆

FLOWER-THIEVES.

There is a class of thieves in our city—would there were only one!—who seem to be beyond the reach of law. I allude in this instance to the flower-thieves, who are mostly juveniles, who wander about, despoiling gardens and shrubs, breaking off branches of young trees from sheer wantonness, and then throwing them down upon the ground. It is very provoking to the lovers and owners of such things, after planting and carefully tending them, and hoping to gladden their eyes with their added beauty as the years go by, and the house they love is made attractive, to be subjected to this lawless ruffianism, without hope of redress; to have no alleviation left to help us bear our dirty streets and gutters, and the detestable ash-barrels and boxes that are a disgrace to our boasted civilization and refinement. Policemen say that thievish boys run so fast they can't be caught. I have known some men do the same; yet law is not quite all a farce, while jails and station-houses and penitentiaries stand. And if policemen of light weight were chosen, who knows but our beloved trees and vines and flowers might be permitted to fulfill their mission and gladden the eyes of all beholders?

There are people, I know, who dislike flowers and children too. I come the nearest to disliking the latter when they steal my cherished flowers. I can forgive the little cunning dirty baby paw inserted between the slats of a fence for the too-tempting "posy;" but your great lubberly boy, who knows what stealing means, who has no real delight in that which he destroys—in fact, in anything but boorish monkey-mischief—*him* would I have grabbed by the stern hand of law long enough to feel his punishment. This, among other things, we *women* shall rectify when we take hold of governmental affairs. *We* shall elect policemen not too fat or too lazy to catch thievish boys. We shall turn a deaf ear to their stereotyped old story of "the boys knowing their beat." Why don't *they* know the *boys' beat?* I'd like to ask. It sometimes has seemed to me, as I strolled past area gates of an evening, that the *girls* knew their "beat" as well as the boys, with a slight difference in this case about the possibility of the policeman's "*catching.*"

FANNY FERN.

◆

A Singular Adventure with Rattlesnakes.

A simple-minded farmer in Arkansas had an adventure with rattlesnakes, a few weeks ago, which might have proved fatal to a wiser man. He was looking for some stray cattle, and on jumping from a rock upon a pile of loose stones, he suddenly found himself in the presence of a family of rattlesnakes. The reptiles played a lively tune with their rattles, hissed, coiled themselves in attitudes of defence, and seemed ready to dart their fangs into the farmer's flesh. Their conduct struck him as so ludicrous that he stood still and roared with laughter. Peal after peal issued from his throat, and the rattlesnakes, utterly astounded, began to uncoil and creep away, and soon disappeared in the crevices of the rocks. The simple-minded farmer then wiped his eyes, which his laughter had filled with tears, and went home and told the story of his adventure, which he persists was the funniest thing he ever experienced in all the days of his life. Had he attempted to defend himself against the reptiles, the chances are that he would have been fatally injured by them.

◆

"Not Very Good Husbands Either."

[From the Poughkeepsie Daily Press.]

An Iowa lady believes in life insurance, as by its agency she has realized $50,000 off two husbands, and not very good husbands either.

VAGRANT BLOSSOMS.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

So the rich man died, and the new-made heir,
Whispered Death's grim Valet, naught to spare.
Hang sombre draping of woven gloom
All around the walls of the silent room;
Put a satin pillow beneath the head,
As he laid him down in his narrow bed;
Bid a silver plate on the coffin tell
That the dust was golden. A silver knell
Ring out as the inky plumes bent low
When the fun'ral train wavered sad and slow.

Gilded and carved with a crown and cross,
Bid the marble speak of the city's loss,
Then deck the grave with a starry bloom
That should cling like love to the rich man's tomb.
Make amends for tears that are all unshed
By the dewy blossoms above his head,
Sweet fragrant things that we keep to crown
The weary ones who have laid them down.

Close by the line of the gilded rail,
On the other side of its gorgeous pale,
Was a shorter grave, in the Autumn made
(Such a little one!) in the sun and shade.
The coffin gleamed with no silver shine
From the shabby lid made of painted pine;
No tombstone told how a chrysalis
Had escaped to the world beyond from this;
Nor the yearning love, nor the mother's woe,
As she left her darling and turned to go,
Too poor to plant a forget-me-not
Or a pansy pale on the sacred spot.

The winter sun and the summer shade
Each had a triple blessing laid,
Ere the heir-at-law, travel weary, came
To the golden dust with the sounding name,
To brush the mould from the stately tomb,
And to gather buds from a mass of bloom.

Lo! weeds and grass and untended moss,
Straggled here and there all the way across.
The spider's web on the tombstone hung,
And over the proud inscription swung,
While dewy white shone the blooming stars,
Quite beyond the line of the gilded bars,
Choosing home and rest in their free-born way
For their fragrant wreaths and their tossing spray.

Musing, the heir o'er the vagrants smiled,
As he saw the grave of the widow's child,
For its flowery web all of woven white,
O'er the baby laid, was a pretty sight;
And he left the sprays as they chose to grow,
Since God and Nature had willed it so,
Planted sturdy things he could better trust
To bloom unloved over golden dust,
While the stars peeped through all the bars to say,
"We loved the baby we couldn't stay."

◆

HAYDN.

BY JAMES PARTON.

In an Austrian village, forty miles from Vienna, there lived, a hundred and fifty years ago, a poor wheelwright named Matthias Haydn, who was also sexton and organist of the village church. He had married the cook of the Count who was lord of the region roundabout: and two or three little children, of the twenty who were to call him father, were already playing around his cottage door.

Matthias Haydn and his wife were both fond of music. Music was their chief pleasure on Sundays and festive days, when the mother used to sing, while the father accompanied her upon the harp. The eldest child of this harmonious couple was Francis Joseph Haydn, the composer of the *Creation*. When he was five years of age, on a certain Sunday afternoon, while the family concert was going on, he picked up two little sticks in his father's shop, took his seat near his parents, and pretended to play upon one of his sticks, as if it were a violin, using the other as a bow, and keeping time with his head and foot with the utmost gravity. The parents paid no particular attention to the boy; but every Sunday afterward, as soon as they began to play, the boy picked up his sticks, and silently joined in the concert.

Some time after, a relation of the family, a schoolmaster from a neighboring town, and a very good musician, paid a visit to the wheelwright, and he observed the exactness with which their little boy marked the time. Discovering that the child had an unusual aptitude for music, he offered to take him home with him and place him in his school, where he would have good instruction in music. The parents consenting, he took the boy home with him on Monday morning, and put him to school at once.

Cousin as the schoolmaster was, he was a perfect martinet; and not only to this boy, but to the whole school. In after years, the great composer used to say that this severity was advantageous to him, for it kept him to his work; so that in three years he learned to read and write, besides a little Latin, and the principles of music. He also attained some skill upon the violin and harpsichord; and at the school festivals it was little Haydn that played the kettle-drum.

"But," as he used to say in after-life, "I was more beaten myself than I beat my drum, and every day at the school my comrades and myself got more blows than bonbons."

A happy chance rescued the boy from this hard school. The conductor of the music of a cathedral in Vienna visited the school one day, in order to inquire whether among the boys there were any who had good voices, whom he could procure for his cathedral choir. The sweet and sonorous voice of little Haydn delighted him; and he was astonished at the ease with which the boy of eight years could read music at sight. The interview ended with his securing the little fellow as a recruit, and ere long Joseph Haydn went to Vienna, where he sang in the choir, and pursued his musical education in the school attached to the cathedral for the purpose of training its musicians. He made the best use of this golden opportunity. No pupil in the school was so attentive to his musical studies as Haydn, and at a very early age he made some attempts to compose pieces of music. At thirteen he composed a mass, which he showed to the conductor, expecting that his effort would be encouraged and applauded. But the master did not condescend even to look over the leaves, but turned his back to the eager lad, saying carelessly, as he walked away:

"Before thinking of original composition, one must learn to write music."

The boy stood stupefied and dismayed at this unlooked-for reception. But, upon reflection, he perceived that the master was right, and that indeed it *was* useless to attempt composition without having learned the laws of harmony and the rules of composition. Having no money with which to pay for lessons, he determined to try to master the science of music with only such assistance as he could get from books. But he had not a florin in the world. In these circumstances, he wrote to his father, telling him that his clothes were very much worn and torn, and begging him to send six florins for their repair. The father complying, he bought two works upon the principles of music, and these he studied with an intensity and perseverance of which men of the first genius alone seem capable. So eager was he in the pursuit of musical knowledge, that those nights of study, when he was shivering with cold, and keeping himself awake with difficulty, studying his musical problems by the side of a battered old harpsichord, were among the happiest of his whole life. He studied sometimes sixteen hours a day, having no assistance but his own indomitable resolution. It was sometimes necessary for him to reflect many hours upon a passage in his books before he could understand it.

Those cathedral schools in Europe contract to maintain and instruct their pupils in music until their voices break, when they are allowed a vacation of two years in order to ascertain whether the voice will retain its good qualities. If, at the end of the two years, the voice is of the requisite goodness and power, the pupil may, if he chooses, enter the choir, and remain in it for life, at a salary sufficient for his maintenance. At eighteen Haydn's voice broke, but he was not allowed the two years' vacation. He happened to have a new pair of scissors, and, as he was going about cutting everything within his reach, it came into his head, in an unlucky moment, to cut off the queue of one of his comrades. The master, who had for some time been jealous of the amazing talent of his pupil, seized this pretext to turn him into the street.

It was nine o'clock of a cold and stormy November evening. The poor lad, without money and without an overcoat, having no friends or relations in the place, wandered all night about the streets of Vienna, almost dead with cold. Soon after daybreak he was met by a poor wig-maker, named KELLER, who, struck with his miserable appearance, accosted him and asked him what was the matter. Haydn told his story. The wig-maker, who had no lodgings for his wife and children except one room in the fifth story, and a small garret chamber above it, offered this shivering child of genius this garret room, and a place at his table.

With joy and gratitude Haydn went home with him, and was at once adopted as a member of the family. The furniture of his little room consisted of one bad straw-bed and one old chair; to which the lad soon added, in some way unknown, an old spinet, upon which he placed his two books upon music. But the wig-maker and his wife made him heartily welcome, and he was soon deep in his musical studies again; "as happy as a king," he used to say. It was not long before he began to earn a little money, and contribute his share to the housekeeping of his benefactor. He earned a few florins by playing the violin at a church orchestra; sang in another sometimes; gave lessons in music; and at length got on so far as to have a piece of music published now and then. Indeed, such immense talent as his could not long be concealed in such a place as Vienna. Various persons of note sought his aid, and gave him employment; and, one evening, when he was playing a serenade under the windows of a celebrated actor and manager, that potentate was so much struck by the composition of the serenade, that he employed him to write a comic opera, which brought a hundred and thirty florins to the composer, and a much larger sum into the treasury of the theatre.

It is wonderful to us who have learned to hold such men in affectionate veneration, that, a hundred years ago, composers of the mightiest genius, even a Mozart or a Haydn, were regarded merely as the servants of the princes who employed them. How inconceivable to us such a scene as the following!—It was the birthday of old Prince Esterhazy, at whose palace a concert was given, at which a new symphony by Haydn was to be performed for the first time, Haydn himself being present. At the end of the first movement, the old Prince interrupted the orchestra with the question:

"What is the name of the composer?"

"Haydn," replied the conductor, at the same time presenting him to the Prince.

"What!" cried the old man, staring at Haydn as though he were a wild beast, "was what I have just heard composed by that *Moor?*"

Haydn's complexion was somewhat dark, and his person was by no means imposing, being short and of no great magnitude.

"O yes!" continued the Prince, "I remember your name now. You already belong to my establishment. But how is it that I have never seen you here?"

Haydn, who was extremely embarrassed, knew not what to reply, and remained silent. The Prince resumed.

"Go and dress yourself as a chapel-master should be dressed. I never wish to see you again in these clothes. They do not become you at all: you are too little, too thin. You must have a new suit, a curly wig, a ribbon, and shoes with red heels, as high as possible, so that your stature may correspond with your talent. Do you hear me? Away with you! My steward will furnish you with all you want."

The Prince then turned to the conductor of the orchestra, and told him to go on with the music. Haydn bowed low, withdrew from the concert-room, and appeared the next day in the costume prescribed for him.

Hard as this treatment seems to us, the income of the place small, but sufficient, gave him thirty years of most peaceful and happy exercise of his talent. Having the control of a good orchestra, he could devote all his time to the art which he loved. The only misfortune of his life was his marriage. He had promised his benefactor, Keller, that if ever he should be well established in the world he would marry one of his daughters. He kept his word, but the union was extremely unhappy; so much so, that at length they separated—he settling upon her a suitable pension.

Few composers have been so uniformly happy and fortunate as Haydn. After composing more than five hundred successful works, and filling both continents with his harmonies and his fame, he sat down at sixty to compose the oratorio of the Creation, by which he is now chiefly known to us. Handel wrote his Messiah in six weeks, but Haydn spent two years upon his Creation, telling his friends that he was a long time about it because he meant it to last a long time.

When Napoleon made his first triumphant entry into Vienna, he honored himself by sending one of his aids to visit the aged composer, and see that no harm befell him.

Haydn died in 1809, aged seventy-seven years, leaving a fortune of about twenty-five thousand dollars, one quarter of which he left to two old servants, and the rest to his nephew, a horseshoer in his native village.

◆

The Danger of Wearing Two Pairs of Trowsers.

[From the Poughkeepsie Press.]

A funny scene transpired in a barber shop on Main street, this forenoon. An elderly gentleman was seated in the chair, after a comfortable scrape. He had used his pocket-book, which he usually tied with a string. He asked a by-stander to tie it up for him, who immediately performed this service, and handed it back to the old gentleman. After some conversation among those present, the old man put his hands in his pantaloons pocket, and couldn't find his pocket-book. Whereupon he charged that the man who tied it up didn't hand it back to him. This the latter indignantly denied, and sharp words followed between them, until the old man, in an excited mood, sprang from his chair, and seizing the object of his suspicion by the coat collar, gave him a lively shaking up. At this point one of the by-standers interposed, and told the old man the pocket-book must be in his pocket, for he saw him put it in. The old man then commenced another search, and found it in the pocket of an inside pair of pantaloons—having on two pair.

This turned the case in favor of the other party. He declared he was not going to have such a shaking up for nothing, and demanded a settlement for the indignity put upon him. The old man found he was cornered, and professed his willingness to make cash amends for his hasty act. After some further negotiation the settlement was agreed upon in that way—price not stated.

◆

Killed the Wrong Boy.

[From the Buffalo Evening Post.]

For some time past a man named Patrick Conners, aged about forty years, residing in the first ward, has been subjected to taunts and insults from a gang of youthful rowdies in that vicinity, who resumed their attacks on Sunday afternoon last, while he was standing on the corner of Elk and Chicago streets. Becoming greatly enraged, he gave chase, and they all fled. Armed with a barrel stave, and passing up Elk street, Conners encountered a youth named John Delaney, aged fifteen years, whom he mistook for one of the crowd of his assailants, and struck him two heavy blows over the head, knocking him senseless. He was taken to his home, and Dr. Ayres, who was summoned, expressed his opinion that there need be no apprehension of serious results; but this morning, at three o'clock, young Delaney died, he having remained insensible from the time he first received his injury.

◆

Ravenous Wild Beast.

[From the Sonora Independent.]

Last Saturday night, the neighborhood of Garrote was alarmed by the rumor that a California lion was foraging in that neighborhood. Mr. Martin Joyce soon found out, to his cost, that it was too true, as a valuable suckling colt was killed by his majesty for supper; after which he left for parts unknown.

[From the St. Catharines Times.]

How to Promote Marriage.

One of the great social problems of the day is to explain why there are so many marriageable women who never get married. Some say that it is owing to an excess in numbers of women over men, in consequence of which there are not husbands enough to go around. This, however, is disproved by statistics. Take the world through, and the figures show that there are as many men in it as there are women. Others attribute it to the expensiveness of modern life. Men do not marry because, it is said, they cannot afford to. But the fact is that no man who truly loved a woman ever hesitated to become engaged to her and eventually marry her because of poverty.

There are cold-blooded fishes, with no idea of any feeling for a woman stronger than a languid admiration, who may be deterred from assuming what they regard as a burden in the shape of a wife unless assured of a liberal income, but most men are not so calculating. Others, again, attribute the evil to women's fastidiousness. They expect too much in a husband, and, while waiting for an impossible shadow, let the possible substance slip through their fingers. This is a libel on the sex. As a rule, they are no more fastidious than men are, and are just as susceptible as men to that enchantment of love which invests its object with every perfection and covers up every fault. So far as men and women themselves are concerned, they are as prone to matrimony now as in any period of the world's history.

Nevertheless, there the women are waiting for husbands, and not getting them. Every social circle is full of them. Every watering-place has its score or more of them, who come wearily, season after season, and exhibit themselves in vain in the matrimonial exchange. They are pretty, they are accomplished, they are sensible, and under proper training they would make excellent wives and mothers; but they never get a chance.

What seems to be needed is a more thorough method of bringing men and women into social contact with each other.

The great trouble, therefore, seems to be to get together and acquainted. If some of our philanthropists would set about the work, and by some means secure a more easy mode of getting marriageable young men and women together, they would be doing an unspeakable amount of good. It is well known that single men and women are never in a state of contentment and happiness. Let, therefore, those good people who desire to see the morality and general well-being of the race promoted, do what they can to help forward, and in every possible way promote marriage among our young people.

◆

A Marriage that Did Not Come Off.

Under this title the *Alabama Herald* publishes the following account of a wedding party at Paint Rock, Ala., whose disappointment was not permitted to spoil their appetite:

We will withhold the names of our friends on Paint Rock, and only state that we are informed that a wedding was to have come off last week to which many persons were invited, and for which most sumptuous feasts had been prepared in both the families of the intended bride and groom. The day arrived, and the guests were all on hand, but from some cause unknown to us, the fair expected bride, within a very short period of the time set for the ceremony, took her leave of the company for another State. The feelings of all can be better imagined than described, and we have no further information on the subject except that the assembled guests ate all the good things prepared by the parents of the young lady, and also went on and did full justice to the intended dinner. You can accomplish almost anything sooner and easier than you can cheat these Paint Rock people out of a good meal, when it has been prepared and the expectation once excited.

◆

[From the Hudson (N. Y.) Star.]

A Slight Mistake.

A practical yet ludicrous illustration of the saying, "Your mistake is my benefit," occurred on board the steamer *Nuhpa* one day last week, the particulars of which are as follows: An Irish girl, of rather prepossessing looks, came aboard the boat after landing at this city, and made inquiries "whether her brother was there." She expected him to arrive on the *Nuhpa*, having landed in New York from "ould Ireland" a few days previously. The person to whom the female put the question, after thinking a moment, concluded that a passenger who was at that time sleeping in one of the state-rooms might be the woman's brother, and so told her to go to number thirty, where she would find the long-expected, much-loved brother, and away went the light-hearted creature to the state-room named, where, sure enough, a man lay on the bed sleeping. His face being partially concealed by the bed-clothes, the delighted female concluded to give the brother a great surprise, and she made a sudden bounce for the unconscious man, and almost smothered him with her fast repeated, sweetest kisses! But, oh, horrors! Instead of reciprocating the lady's kindness, the awakened passenger rolled over, and in a terrified manner, shouted aloud, "What's de matter mit you? Who ish you, any how? Why don't you say sometings?" Of course this kind of talk was not of the sort to convince the poor, mistaken female that she had kissed a brother, and she bashfully and sadly left the boat, muttering to herself, "Oh, murther, phwat a mistake!"

◆

Where we All Begin.

Composition of a little boy, in the Bishop Scott Grammar School, Portland, Oregon—Verbatim et literatim.

OXEN.

Oxen is a very slow animal. They are very good to brake up ground.

I would rather have horses if they didn't have colic—Which they say is wind collected in a bunch. Which makes it dangereser to keep horses than oxen.

If their were no horses people wood have to wheal their wood in a wheal-barrow. It wood take them two or three days to wheal a cord a mile.

Cows are useful to. I heard some people say that if they had to be a ox or a cow they wood sooner be a cow, but I think when it come to be milked on a cold winter morning I think they wood sooner be oxen, for oxen don't have to raise calves—If I had to be a ox or a cow I wood be a heffer but if I could not be a heffer and had to be both I wood be a ox.

◆

Forgetting the Corpse.

[From the Newburyport (Mass.) Herald.]

A short time ago a little babe in Portland, Maine, died, and, as is sometimes the case, was laid away in the bureau drawer till the funeral. The day of the funeral came, and the bereaved mother was convulsed with grief over the little casket, and sobbing, laid it away in the cold ground. On her return home she thought she would go to the drawer and gaze once more at the place which would henceforth be consecrated, when what should meet her eyes, when the drawer was opened, but the lifeless corpse of the child that had been entirely forgotten in preparation for the funeral.

◆

Poisoned to Death by a Two-Cent Piece.

[From the Poughkeepsie Press.]

Wm. Tucker, Jr., aged three years, son of Wm. Tucker, residing in Mansion street, died yesterday morning from the poisonous effects of a two-cent piece which he swallowed on Friday of last week. Dr. Andrus attended him, but the poison became so infused through the system of the little unfortunate before the cause could be removed, that medical skill was of no avail. After death the body was opened, and the action of the coppery substance clearly revealed in green spots above the liver.

◆

Carelessness Running in the Family.

[From the Norristown Free Press.]

Horatio Sands, while handling a revolver, was shot in the breast, by the hammer of the weapon slipping from his fingers, causing one of the barrels to explode. The ball struck the breast-bone, and glancing, lodged in the left shoulder, inflicting only a slight wound. Horatio's brother carries a bullet in his flesh, which was planted there last August while carelessly handling a pistol.

NO MORE.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

She sat within her little room,
And conned the lesson lately taught;
Riven the web in Faith's bright loom—
He did not love her as she thought.
The fleeting dream of joy was o'er,
Through golden glass she looked no more;
No more, no more—
Her best beloved loved no more.

Long years have come and gone since then,
And she has wept by dying beds;
She knows the grief we suffer when
The sod grows green o'er worshipped heads.
Yet, while each bitter pain she wore,
She knew the bitterest rod she bore,
What time the mirage mist passed o'er,
And Love's false waters mocked no more.

For still the picture she can trace:
The dying fire between the bars,
The curtain's flimsy folds of lace,
Through which shone in the frosty stars;
She in her maiden loneliness,
With unclasped zone and unbound tress,
Sighing, "No more—
No more his love my life shall bless!"

◆

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THE MANAGER'S REPORT.

In obedience to the command of Lord Waldemar, his manager Grimrod departed that very night from Yorkshire, upon his search for the young orphan heiress.

His lordship remained at Floyd Manor, awaiting news from him with a feverish anxiety, which he endeavored to conceal under an increased testiness and irritability.

Two days later a telegraphic dispatch, dated at Paris, arrived from Grimrod, announcing that he was fairly on his way. And four days later still, his lordship received a dispatch from Trieste, announcing the safe arrival at that city of his manager.

Then followed a silence of three days on the part of Grimrod, during which Lord Waldemar was moody, silent and savage, remaining for the most part alone in his library, no one daring to intrude upon him.

"I hope the girl is dead," he said to himself repeatedly, as he walked the floor with quick, impetuous tread. "But the bare possibility that she lives—an ignorant peasant—married to a peasant, perhaps—with peasant children already clinging to her gown, and looking up into her vacant, stolid face, is insupportable. What can she be at seventeen, this girl who is my only direct descendent upon the face of the earth, and my rightful heiress? I dread to look upon her, and yet I long to see her."

Upon the fourth day after Grimrod's arrival at Trieste, there came to Lord Waldemar a long dispatch, stating that he had discovered and called upon the Austrian gentleman in whose family Wallace Floyd had served as tutor, but had failed to obtain any information concerning Wallace Floyd's child or that child's nurse. He had also visited the former lodgings of Wallace Floyd, but none of its tenants had ever heard of the young English tutor. He had discovered the fellow-lodger of the Floyds who had written the letter announcing Mrs. Floyd's death and little Hilda's disappearance with her nurse, and had learned the name of the nurse and some particulars of the nurse's history. He believed also that he had obtained a clue to the subsequent movements of the nurse and her small charge.

The next dispatch declared that the supposed clue had failed, but that Grimrod was by no means hopeless of finding those he sought. All his energies were bent to the task of finding the young heiress, and he would not return to England without her.

Subsequent messages were dated at Venice, Rome and Florence, which places the manager visited in turn, and then there followed a silence of several days, during which Lord Waldemar fumed and raged, and more than once resolved to set out for the Continent in person, notwithstanding the fact that his health was not sufficiently restored to admit of the necessary fatigues of incessant journeying.

At length there came from Innsbruck a brief dispatch in these words:

"Found. We start for home to-day."

This simple announcement, so vague yet comprehensive, threw Lord Waldemar into a very fever of excitement. His granddaughter might be married, or a mere peasant in breeding, but she was his lawful heiress, and he must accept her as such.

"I'll get a governess for her first of all," he said to himself. "She can live here at the Manor with her teacher, or I'll assign her another residence where I will not be likely to see her. The less I see of this descendent of Squire Arlyn," he added, scowling, "the better."

He summoned his butler and housekeeper to him. They had grown gray in his service. They had known Wallace Floyd from his birth to the date of his expulsion from his father's house, and had loved the frank, light-hearted, impulsive boy, as had every one who had known him. The secret longing of their faithful old hearts was to see their young master restored to his own again, and this fact Lord Waldemar well knew.

The couple, portly and ruddy, with the staid and respectable demeanor which characterizes the best of their class, stood before their employer expectantly, the agitation of his lordship betraying that he had a communication of unusual importance to make to them.

"Poss," said Lord Waldemar, "I have something to say to you and to your wife, and I desire you to hear it in silence. I want no comments, you understand. Mr. Wallace Floyd, who married the daughter of Squire Arlyn, is dead—"

The housekeeper caught her breath sharply, turning pale. The butler was not the less startled, but his lordship's keen and haggard eyes were upon him, and he dared not give vent to his emotion.

"Does—does your lordship wish the household to put on mourning, as is customary?" asked the housekeeper tremulously.

"No. Mr. Wallace Floyd has been dead these sixteen years," said the Baron hoarsely. "I—I never knew of his death until some three weeks ago. Squire Arlyn's daughter is also dead. Mr. Wallace Floyd left a daughter, who is now about seventeen years of age. Mr. Grimrod will arrive at the Manor with this young lady in the course of a few days. Let a suit of rooms suitable for her occupancy be prepared for her. You may announce to the servants also the coming of this young lady. Her position in the house you will know from the fact that she is my granddaughter and heiress, and that she will be some day Baroness Waldemar in her own right. That is all. You may go."

He dismissed them with a wave of his hand.

The butler and housekeeper set to work zealously to prepare the grand old mansion for the reception of the youthful heiress. Lord Waldemar peremptorily forbade any out-door demonstrations such as they longed to make, any assembling of the tenantry, and any manifestation of joyous welcome. The old servitors were therefore restricted to the adornment of the young lady's rooms, but they chose for her the sunniest, pleasantest apartments in the house, and gathered into them the choicest pictures, the most luxurious furniture, and made fires in these rooms daily, that not a vestige of dampness might remain in their walls.

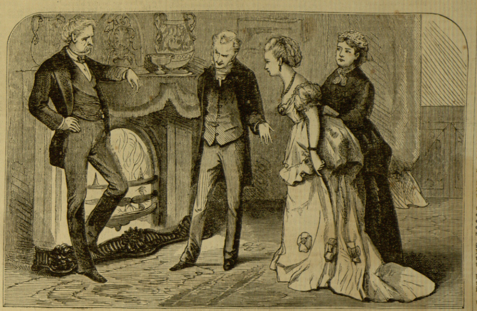
Lord Waldemar divided his time nearly equally between his bedroom and library. In the course of a week after the receipt of the announcement that the young heiress had been found, his lordship received a letter from Grimrod, dated at Paris, and stating that he was on his way home with Miss Floyd and her nurse, the Englishwoman who had attended upon her from her birth, and who had never since lost sight of her young charge. His lordship's granddaughter was not married, and was, as her dying mother had written, "a true Floyd." She would do honor to her name and race. She did not yet know of her relationship to Lord Waldemar, but believed herself to be simply Hilda Floyd, on her way to her grandfather, Squire Floyd. Grimrod desired to keep her rank and that of her grandfather a secret from her until after her arrival at Floyd Manor. He purposed remaining at Paris three or four days to replenish the wardrobe of the young heiress, that her first appearance at her future home might not be a discredit to his lordship.

It was nearly a week after the receipt of this letter that, a message having arrived from Grimrod, dated at London, and announcing the hour of his intended arrival home, a carriage was sent to the nearest railway station to meet the travellers.

It was a wild March night, with sleet in the air, and a cutting wind that rattled the Manor windows, and blew in fitful gusts through the lofty halls and corridors whenever a door was opened, and swept in wailing blasts among the trees that dotted the lawn—a night as cold and fierce as any of the preceding winter.

Lord Waldemar, dressed to receive his guest, was in the library, impatient and savage, all the bitterness of his long enmity to his dead neighbor revived within him.

The drawing-room was lighted with glittering chandeliers upholding forests of wax-candles, and was warmed by cheering sea-coal fires. The Holland covers had been removed from the pale blue satin furniture, the piano that had been unused for years stood open, and a collection of new music, selected by the housekeeper, was close at hand. The blue satin curtains fell in heavy folds over the wide windows, and depended from the arch of the recessed bay. Everything was dainty, luxurious and grand, as became the stately mansion and Lord Waldemar's great wealth.



GRIMROD INTRODUCING HILDA TO LORD WALDEMAR.

The entire façade of the dwelling was lighted. The dining-room, conservatory and morning room seemed actually ablaze with lights, whose glow and radiance streamed far out into the gusty night.

It was about eight o'clock when the carriage came swiftly up the avenue and rolled into the carriage porch. The house door swung open from within, and Grimrod came up the broad steps with a vailed and girlish figure beside him, and closely followed by an elderly, hard-featured woman, whose dress and appearance indicated a higher social position than merely that of a nurse and attendant.

The butler and housekeeper stood together in the hall to receive their young mistress. A single glance assured the manager that the Baron had not come forth to welcome his granddaughter, and a sudden contraction of his brows showed that Grimrod was inclined to resent the apparent incivility.

"Mrs. Poss," he said abruptly, addressing the beaming housekeeper, "be kind enough to show this young lady to her rooms. And let her trunks, which will be here directly, be sent up to her immediately on their arrival. She will change her dress before seeing her grandfather."

The young lady did not raise her vail, and Mrs. Poss, the smiles fading from her face, and a sudden gravity settling upon her heart, silently conducted the heiress and her attendant up the broad staircase to the rooms that had been prepared for her.

Grimrod looked after the departing figures for a moment, and then said to the butler:

"Is Lord Waldemar well, Poss?"

"Very well, sir," replied Poss. "His lordship's in the library, and ordered that you should be ushered into his presence on your arrival."

"All right, Poss. I'll announce myself," said the manager.

He flung off his greatcoat and cap, and surveyed himself in the hall mirror. Then he hastened to the door of the library, tapped lightly, and went into the room.

Lord Waldemar, with a countenance pale with excitement and agitation, came forward to meet him, holding out his hand.

"So you're back at last, Grimrod?" he said, rather ungraciously. "Is—is the girl with you?"

He looked past his manager, as if expecting to behold his granddaughter in the door-way.

"Miss Floyd is gone up to her rooms, my lord," said Grimrod. "She will be down as soon as she has made some change in her toilet."

Lord Waldemar dropped the manager's hand and walked slowly toward the fire.

"You were fortunate in your search," he said. "I did well to intrust the matter to you. But are you sure, Grimrod, that you've found my son's daughter—that she is the right girl?"

"Perfectly sure, my lord," replied Grimrod. "But you can judge for yourself. The young lady is very handsome, in my opinion, and will do you credit. I predict that she will speedily become a favorite with you."

"How did you find her?"

"The fellow-lodger of Mrs. Wallace Floyd, who wrote to announce Mrs. Floyd's death to your lordship so many years ago, is still living in Trieste. I had made a memorandum of his name, and easily found him. He remembered Mrs. Floyd's child's nurse, even to her name, which is Mrs. Emmeline Watchley. The name is not common, and I actually traced her by it. A shopkeeper in Trieste, whom I sought out, and who lived in the neighborhood of Mrs. Floyd's former lodgings, gave me very material information and aid. This Mrs. Watchley had been his regular customer during her two years' stay at Trieste, and after Mrs. Floyd's death he sold the woman a small bill of goods upon credit. She subsequently remitted to him by post from Venice the sum due him. So I went to Venice. A false clue sent me on to Rome and Florence. Returning to Venice, I discovered the lodging-house keeper with whom Mrs. Watchley had lodged several months, the child with her. This lodging-house keeper informed me that a courier whom she knew had seen a woman named Mrs. Watchley at Innsbruck, some ten years ago. So I went to Innsbruck, and there I was fortunate enough to find Miss Floyd and her old nurse. The story of my search seems simple, my lord, but in truth I had to use the skill and energy of a detective, and the patience of a North American Indian."

"Never mind about all these particulars now," said Lord Waldemar impatiently. "I will hear the whole story at length at some future time. How old is my granddaughter?"

"Seventeen, my lord."

"She has been all these years in the sole charge of this nurse?"

"Yes, my lord."

"She is a peasant then in breeding? An ignorant, low-bred girl, whom the very scullions here will sneer at?"

"No, my lord. This Mrs. Watchley is superior to her station, and is ladylike and possesses a fair share of education. She was left a widow in a strange land, and Mrs. Wallace Floyd engaged her as child's nurse, and treated her as a friend and companion. Only her poverty would have made this woman accept a menial position. She lived with Mrs. Floyd from the period of Hilda's birth until Mrs. Floyd's death. She knew that Wallace Floyd was the son and heir of a rich Yorkshire squire, but she knew nothing of your prospects of succession to a barony. Those prospects were too vague sixteen years ago to be worth your son's consideration, you will remember, my lord. Mrs. Watchley knew of the letter Mrs. Floyd wrote to you. For days and weeks and months Mrs. Floyd waited for some letter or messenger from you, but as none came she thought that you intended to discard your granddaughter for her parents' faults, and a great terror came upon her lest her child should be consigned to some foundling hospital or orphan asylum, in which even the child's very identity would be lost. The thought that her daughter might grow up in ignorance—perhaps in vice—was terrible to her."

Lord Waldemar averted his face, but the manager could see that the Baron was deeply moved.

"Go on," said his lordship hoarsely.

"As death came nearer, this terror increased upon Mrs. Floyd. The day before she died she told Mrs. Watchley of the old Floyd and Arlyn feud, and informed her that you were a rich landed proprietor, and that some portion of your property must inevitably come to little Hilda some day. She told her, in short, that Miss Floyd would be an heiress. And she also told Mrs. Watchley that you would never receive the child, nor do anything for her, and that, as you had disregarded her letter and that of her husband, you would not heed the pleadings of any one in behalf of little Hilda. She implored Mrs. Watchley to keep the little one, to cherish and to teach her, assuring her that when Miss Hilda came to her own she would repay her. Mrs. Watchley, thus entreated, yielded to Mrs. Floyd's prayers, and even took a solemn oath that she would not part from the child while she lived, and that she would educate her to the best of her ability, and would, when Miss Floyd became of age, bring her to England and to you."

"But how has the woman been able to retain the girl?"

"Mrs. Watchley went to Venice after Mrs. Floyd's death, hoping to fall in with an English family who would give her employment. But she could find no employer who would permit her to keep the child with her, and she therefore engaged lodgings, and found sewing to do for English tourists, and eked out a scanty living for some months. But just as the struggle to keep soul and body together was becoming too much for her, she received news from England that an uncle of hers had died and left her an income of two hundred pounds a year. She had the instincts of a gentlewoman, and this sum would permit her to live like one in some cheap continental town. So she went to Innsbruck, where she has lived with her charge for fifteen years, more or less. Miss Floyd has always known of her parentage, and has been taught that she is the granddaughter of a rich Yorkshire squire. She has the pride of the Floyds, my lord. Mrs. Watchley has educated her with great care, has provided her with tutors and masters, and your lordship will find the young lady refined, intelligent, well bred—in short, all your lordship can desire."

"She seems to have captivated you, at least," said Lord Waldemar dryly. "I hope she will turn out all you say. I am relieved to find that I shall not be compelled to blush for her. Bring her to me, Grimrod. I will see her, and judge for myself."

CHAPTER IV.

HILDA.

In obedience to the command of Lord Waldemar, Grimrod quitted the library in search of Miss Floyd. He found Poss the butler in the act of passing through the great hall, and learned from him the position of the rooms assigned Miss Floyd, and went up to them at once, declining to send a message.

These rooms were in the eastern wing of the mansion, upon the second floor, and comprised a complete suit. The manager knocked at one of the doors, and a voice from within bade him enter. He obeyed, and found himself in Miss Floyd's sitting-room, which was tenanted at the moment of his appearance by Mrs. Watchley, the devoted attendant of the young heiress.

The room was long and high, with a wide oriel window upon its eastern front, and a French window with a balcony at its southern end. These windows were draped with curtains of rose-colored satin. The walls were painted a soft rose color and were panelled with exquisite pictures in water-color. The carpet was a pink Aubusson, and the couches and chairs were upholstered in rose satin. A bright fire was glowing behind the silvered bars of the grate.

In the middle of the room, under the chandelier with its thicket of tall wax-candles, stood a round table, all a-glitter with silver, crystal, and Sèvres porcelain, upon which was spread a sumptuous little dinner, flanked with choice wines, and surrounding a silver épergne of flowers.

Grimrod noted all these points in the charming picture before him, and even noticed the rose-colored Sèvres vases crowded with hot-house flowers, that glowed like gems upon the low marble mantel-piece, before he glanced at Mrs. Watchley, who quietly awaited his pleasure.

At last, with a start, he turned toward her.

She looked, as he had said, like a gentlewoman. She had made a fresh toilet since her arrival, and now wore a trained dress of heavy black silk with hanging sleeves, and a profusion of rare old point lace which was yellow with age. She wore also a quaint set of jewelry, of red gold, shaped in an odd Etruscan pattern; and a small square of Irish point lace rested lightly upon her head.

She was a large and portly woman, with sandy hair and a florid complexion, and evidently possessed a strong and decided character and a determined will. She wore a pair of gold-mounted eye-glasses, which were attached to a heavy gold chain which encircled her neck, and these glasses gave a masculine character to her countenance.

"Miss Floyd is lodged like a princess," said the manager, more to himself than to Mrs. Watchley. "She is very fortunate. Where is she?" he added, in a louder voice. "Her grandfather has asked for her, and it will not do to keep him waiting."

"Of course not," returned Mrs. Watchley, with a shadow of anxiety on her face. "Hilda is still at her toilet, assisted by the maid the housekeeper had engaged for her. Her dinner has been waiting for her these fifteen minutes, but will have to wait now until after her interview with his lordship."

She hastened into the inner room, and was absent some minutes. The sound of voices in altercation reached the ears of the manager, and he stood listening, half prompted, as it seemed, to penetrate into the inner room and the very presence of the young heiress.

"Why don't she hurry?" he said to himself uneasily. "Everything depends upon first impressions, and Lord Waldemar is the soul of punctuality. If he once takes a dislike to her—"

The sentence was not finished, for the door of the dressing-room opened and Mrs. Watchley reappeared, followed by her young charge.

The manager stared at Miss Floyd in a mute admiration.

She was in full evening dress of pale pink silk, with an overdress of white lace which resembled frost-work. Her neck and arms were bare, save for the necklace and bracelets of pearls, which brought into relief their rounded contour.

Although but seventeen years of age, Miss Floyd possessed the self-confidence and hauteur of a woman of twice her years. She was a blonde of the fairest type, with a delicately fair complexion, as pure as the petal of a rose leaf—and it well might be, for the sun and wind were rarely allowed to caress it. Her eyes were of a soft blue, and her hair, of a pale fawn color, looked in some lights like golden floss. There was no insipidity in her features. She was tall, and her figure was well developed and distinguished for its haughty carriage. She was undeniably pretty, well bred and graceful. She was more than these, having a depth of character which even Mrs. Watchley had not yet fathomed.

Grimrod's Mephistophelean face lighted up, and he advanced a step nearer the young heiress, exclaiming:

"How royally beautiful you are, Miss Floyd! I am impatient to hear what your grandfather has to say to you. I am sent to bring you to him."

Miss Floyd looked at the manager with a supercilious frown upon her fair brow, and with a flutter of her silken garments swept to her seat at the table, saying indolently:

"My grandfather has kept me waiting his pleasure for many years. He may wait mine a single hour. Watchley, you may summon a servant to wait upon me."

"But, my dear Miss Floyd," expostulated Grimrod, in consternation, "his—your grandfather will be in a rage. He is the most punctual of men. His will is supreme here, and even you will have to succumb to it. I assure you that you will injure yourself if you commence in this manner. I implore you, Miss Floyd—"

The young lady arched her brows superciliously, and interposed haughtily:

"You forget yourself, Mr. Grimrod. You will oblige me by remembering the difference between your station and mine, please; and do not offend by addressing me again in such a manner."

"Hilda," cried Mrs. Watchley hastily, "Mr. Grimrod is your grandfather's business manager and confidential friend. You will do well to make him your friend also. And let me beg you to go with him to your grandfather. You cannot be too prompt and zealous for your own good, Hilda. Your grandfather has a fearful temper, and at the best he is more likely to hate you than to like you."

"His love and his hate are alike to me," said Miss Floyd coolly, helping herself to game, and pouring for herself a glass of sparkling Moselle. "I understand that the Floyd estates are entailed, and that a woman can inherit them, and I am Squire Floyd's only descendent. I see no occasion for any mad haste on my part. And as to making friends with his business manager," and her thin lips curled, "I have not such low tastes myself. I shall not stoop to make friends with any hired servant where I am mistress. Mr. Grimrod has offended me since the first hour I beheld him at Innsbruck, with his solicitude and familiarity, and I can assure him that when I am mistress and owner of Floyd Manor, I shall not be likely to retain him in his present position."

Mrs. Watchley glanced quickly at Grimrod. His impassive, inscrutable countenance betrayed no chagrin at hearing this plainly spoken ill opinion of him.

"We will hope that Miss Floyd may change her mind when she arrives at the dignity of which she speaks," he said quietly, with an odd mocking light in his small black eyes. "I shall not bear malice for these hasty words, my dear young lady, and should you ever need a friend, you have only to call upon Nelson Grimrod—myself, Miss Floyd. My life, if need be, shall be spent in your service;" and a deeper earnestness crept into his voice. "And now," he added, with sudden apprehensiveness, "let me again urge you, Miss Hilda, to come with me to your grandfather."

The young lady went on with her dinner composedly, and deigned no reply.

"There is no use in urging her, Mr. Grimrod," said Mrs. Watchley, with a despairing inflection of voice. "She is always so—just so headstrong and obstinate. She has been so from a baby. Her own will is her guide always. What she wants to do, that she does. What she does not choose to do, nothing can compel her to do."

Miss Floyd looked up at her attendant with a steel-like glimmer in her soft blue eyes.

"Make your speeches a little more flattering, Watchley," she said imperatively, "or I may find that now I am no longer dependent upon you, I need your services no longer."

Mrs. Watchley's florid face paled, and an uncomfortable silence succeeded. The heiress ate her dinner slowly, and with evident enjoyment. Grimrod watched her as if fascinated, with a strange, inscrutable expression in his eyes.

No one spoke again until Miss Floyd, having partaken of the hot-house peaches and Malaga grapes, arose at last, and signified that it was now her pleasure to be conducted to her grandfather.

Grimrod led the way into the great upper hall, down the grand staircase, and through the lower hall, Miss Floyd graciously following, and Mrs. Watchley bringing up the rear.

The manager opened the library door and ushered in the heiress and her attendant.

Lord Waldemar stood near the fireplace, leaning upon the marble mantel-piece, his gaze fixed upon the flames. He looked up as the new-comers entered, his stern and haughty face turned upon the advancing figure of the girl, his grand eyes seeking to read her nature in her face.

She came up to him smiling, with outstretched hand. But as no answering smile lighted up his face, and his hand was not extended to her, she halted near him, and a look of defiance was flashed up at him from her soft blue eyes.

"Who is this young woman, Grimrod?" inquired his lordship, without turning his glance from her.

The manager's dark face paled with startling swiftness. A sudden terror gloomed his eyes. His emotion, remarkable in him who never betrayed emotion, was conquered before any one had noticed it save Mrs. Watchley.

"She is Hilda Floyd, your granddaughter, my lord," replied the manager, in his usual impassive voice.

The young lady started as she heard the title, and regarded Lord Waldemar with kindling eyes.

"She is no 'true Floyd,' Grimrod," said his lordship. "*The Floyds for many generations* have had fair hair with black eyes. My own eyes are black, and my hair was fair. My son had yellow hair, and eyes as black as sloes. A *Floyd face might be known* anywhere, by the singular conjunction of two strangely opposite types. This young woman must be an Arlyn, with her blue eyes—and I hate an Arlyn as I hate a snake!" muttered Lord Waldemar between his teeth. "The young woman has little of my son in her looks. She must take greatly after her mother. You are sure, Grimrod, that you have not made a mistake and brought me the wrong girl? You have not deceived yourself by one or two points of resemblance, such as the fair hair, and brought me a girl not of my blood or race?"

"I am quite sure, my lord."

"'My lord,'" repeated the young lady wonderingly.

"Ah, you did not know my rank?" said Lord Waldemar, addressing the young lady for the first time. "You believed me simply Squire Floyd. I was Squire Floyd. I am Lord Waldemar. I have no descendent other than my son's child. My title and estates descend in the female line in default of direct male heirs, and my granddaughter will succeed me not only as owner of the Waldemar estates, but as possessor of the Waldemar title. My granddaughter will be Baroness Waldemar in her own right."

Miss Floyd's fair cheeks flushed with an uncontrollable eagerness, but she did not speak.

"I had but one child," continued his lordship, with a sternness that was terrible, his gloomy eyes still fixed upon the young lady's fair and eager face, "and he cheated me, and married the daughter of the man I hated. I cast him off, and he died in poverty and exile under my curse. His wife perished also. I wish to give you fair warning, young lady, that the sins of disobedience and deceit are horrible in my eyes, and I can never forgive one who endeavors to practice them upon me. You have not my boy's frank and open face. If you are but guilty of the secret treachery he practiced; if you marry against my will as he did, or if you encourage a lover I do not approve, I will drive you forth from my house and doom you to poverty and dependence upon others so long as I live! Do you understand?"

Miss Floyd understood but too well. Every trace of color fled from her face, and she trembled like a leaf in the wind. Mrs. Watchley was also pale and agitated.

Grimrod regarded the two women with surprise and a sudden suspicion. Had Miss Floyd already a lover? He was determined to solve the mystery of her singular agitation before he slept.

"Do you understand?" again demanded the Baron, as the girl did not answer.

She faltered an affirmative.

"It is well," said his lordship. "I demand implicit obedience, but I do not want your love. I have loved and have been betrayed by my own son, and I cannot believe that his child and that of Janet Arlyn can be truer than he."

He turned abruptly toward Mrs. Watchley, and said:

"Madam, I have a few brief questions to ask you. Be kind enough to reply to them briefly. Is this girl the daughter of Wallace and Janet Floyd?"

"She is, my lord."

"You were present at her birth and have watched over her all her life, and can swear that she is the same child who was intrusted to you by the dying Janet Floyd?"

"Yes, my lord; I can swear it."

"Have you any certificate of her birth, madam?"

Mrs. Watchley assented, and produced from her pocket a certified copy of the registry of the birth of "Hilda, daughter and first child of Wallace and Janet Floyd, of Yorkshire, England, born at Trieste," etc.

Lord Waldemar read the paper, and put it in his own pocket-book.

"I have every confidence in the skill and sagacity of Grimrod," he said quietly, "and I have proved his devotion to me too many times to doubt that he has carefully examined the case in all its bearings, and has satisfied himself that this young lady is actually my granddaughter. Grimrod is the only being in the whole world whom I entirely trust. My own son deceived and mocked me, but Grimrod is as true to me as the needle to the pole. Yet I must satisfy myself with my own eyes that this girl is my granddaughter. There must not be a shadow of doubt left upon my mind—not a loop-hole for future suspicions to enter. Young lady, be good enough to show me your left arm."

Miss Floyd came nearer to him, and placed the fair member in his grasp.

Grimrod lighted a taper and brought it to the Baron, who took it and made a close scrutiny of the girl's arm.

He found above the wrist an irregular scar, very faint, such as would have resulted from a knife wound inflicted in infancy. He found also, above the elbow, a crimson mark like a dagger, the counterpart of a mark such as his son had had when born, and which he remembered perfectly.

"The evidence is complete," said the Baron, dropping the arm and giving the taper to his manager. "I acknowledge this young lady as my granddaughter, the Honorable Hilda Floyd."

Grimrod drew a sigh as of relief, and dropped the nearly burned out taper into the fire.

"Mrs. Watchley," said his lordship, after a moment's silence, "I am pleased to find in you a gentlewoman, instead of the ignorant woman I had expected. I desire you to remain with my granddaughter as her friend and counsellor. She regards you as a mother, I do not doubt, and your home shall be with her throughout the remainder of your life. The money you have disbursed for her shall be returned to you with interest. The care you have given to her can never be repaid. I had looked to find in my granddaughter an ignorant, low-bred peasant, and I find her—thanks to you—intelligent, educated, refined—in short, a lady. Accept my thanks for your kindness to her. Grimrod has doubtless explained to you the reason why she has been left all these years upon your hands. Grimrod," added the Baron, "let it be understood in the house that Mrs. Watchley is Miss Floyd's friend and companion, and I desire you to charge yourself with the payment to Mrs. Watchley of an annual sum of three hundred pounds."

"Lord Waldemar—you are too generous," faltered the widow, apparently overwhelmed.

"I am only just, madam," said his lordship coldly, yet courteously. "Miss Floyd," and he turned to the young lady, "you will preside over my household. You will go to town when I go, and be introduced to the world. Remember the warning I gave you. So long as you are honest and truthful with me, I will be your friend. At the first sign of treachery or deceit, I'll drop you as I would a viper. You are an heiress, and I require you to dress as one. You will have an annual allowance of five hundred pounds per annum, which Grimrod will pay to you quarterly, or as you may prefer. It is well to settle these small matters and understand each other."

Miss Floyd made a little swoop forward, and caught one of Lord Waldemar's hands in both her own. Then she drew down his stately head and kissed his swart cheek, exclaiming:

"Dear grandpapa! Let me thank you for all your kindness to me. I will not reward you as papa did. I will be the child of your old-age, and I'll never—never leave you!"

Lord Waldemar shook off her clinging arms, and did not return her kiss, but the gloom on his stern and shaggy brows was somewhat lightened. He presently dismissed Miss Floyd and Mrs. Watchley, and Grimrod went with them to the door and into the hall beyond, where he exchanged a few whispered words with the widow. Then the manager returned to his employer, exclaiming:

"Your lordship is fortunate in having so lovely and so beautiful an heiress. Such grace—such pride—such—"

"Don't!" interposed the Baron impatiently. "Your words jar on me, Grimrod. What is beauty without truth? Do you think this girl with her blue eyes and her fair face will ever deceive me?"

"Never—never, my lord."

"I would have sworn that my son was as true as Heaven," sighed the Baron. "She may turn out like him; but in the hour that she does, I'll cast her also adrift. She's no 'true Floyd,' Grimrod. It must be that she favors the accursed Arlyn tribe. Yet, as you say, she is beautiful. I wonder what my nephew will say to her? He has for years believed my son to be dead and childless, and has looked upon himself as the next Baron Waldemar. The vexed question of the Waldemar succession is, it seems, at last settled, and in a manner Darrel Moer will not like. Sit down at my desk there, Grimrod, and write to Darrel Moer. Tell him that my heiress—the only child of Wallace Floyd—is here at the Manor. We'll see how the news will affect him."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MABEL LANG.

BY MARIE L. DOUGHTY.

"Here comes Mabel now," said Charly Halsey.

"And who is that with her?" I inquired.

"That," said Charly, "is Flora Allen."

"Oh," I replied, "*la petite blonde*, I suppose, that you have raved about in your letters, for the last two weeks."

"The same," he answered; "is she not lovely?"

"Well, Charles," said I, "if you want my true opinion, I must say, No."

"Not lovely!" exclaimed Charles. "Why, where are your eyes, man? Look at her complexion; what lily or rose can rival it? Look at her golden hair, her ruby lips, her azure eyes!"

"I grant you," I answered, "the coloring is fine; but her face has about as much expression as a bowl of milk, and she is no more to be compared to Mabel Lang than chalk is to cheese."

"You are very choice in your comparisons," said Charles scornfully; "and I am quite sure Mabel has too much sense to wish any one to attempt to pass her off as a beauty."

"Nevertheless, Charles, I should call her far more beautiful than Miss Allen. Watch her now," I said, "as she comes up the road. Could any one move more gracefully? Look at her clear-cut face, her firm mouth, her decided chin; more than all, notice her earnest, soul-lit eyes—so unfathomable, and yet so tender. I tell you, Charles, you are a fool to give that straw-colored-haired blonde a thought, when that matchless woman loves you."

"Well," he said carelessly, "'that matchless woman,' as you term her, sees you now; so perhaps you had better go and pay your respects to her."

I had known Mabel many years, and as perhaps you have guessed, loved her. Once I had hoped to win her love in return, but Charles Halsey's handsome face proved mightier than my love. He prevailed, as I foresaw from the first he would, and I took a trip to South America, leaving Mabel in blissful ignorance of the state of my heart, and the cause of my departure.

On my return, having been absent six months, I sought out Charles, and he informed me that he was going to spend the summer at N——.

"Mrs. Lang had bought a cottage there," he said, "and the bathing and fishing were fine; besides, Mabel would be there, and some friend of hers, who would doubtless prove terribly *de trop*. Do come along, Frank," he had urged, "and take her off our hands. You are a favorite of Mrs. Lang's, and she will be delighted to see you, and so will Mabel."

So I had promised ere the autumn came to visit them at the seaside. And when about a month later I received a kind note from Mrs. Lang inviting me to come, I started at once. And it was only about an hour after my arrival that the above conversation had taken place.

Mabel greeted me with outstretched hands and a glad smile, which soon died out, however, and I noticed a wistful, troubled look in her eyes that I had never seen there before. Charly was talking to Flora, and his face and manner showed me the cause of her grief. He is neglecting Mabel, I thought angrily, with a strong desire in my heart to knock him down.

"Come, Frank," said Mabel presently, laying her slender hand on my arm, "I want to show you our beach; it is the nicest place for bathing in the world."

I drew her dear hand tighter through my arm, and we sauntered off toward the sea. Yes, the beach was nice, as she had said—a trifle dangerous for bathing, perhaps, as there seemed a strong undertow; but Mabel explained that none of them ventured beyond their depth, excepting herself, and she added laughingly:

"I am quite a swimmer. Besides," she said, "you see we have a little boat anchored off those rocks; so, if any of us are drowning, some one can jump in the boat, and row out and save us."

"Provided," I answered, "that that *some one* happens to see you in time."

"Well," she said, "I shall never be afraid of drowning while you are near, Frank, for I feel sure you would save me."

"God grant it," said I so earnestly that she looked in my face surprised, and I was glad that at that moment Charles and Flora joined us.

I will pass over the next few weeks; they were scarcely pleasant ones to me: to Mabel I am sure they were painful. Charles still carried on his flirtation with Flora, and Mabel and I were left much together. This would have made me happy, had I not seen that Charly's behavior was cutting her to the heart. And when in a fit of impatience I spoke to her about it, she said:

"Frank, you are an old friend, and it would be foolish in me to attempt to deceive you. Charly's conduct pains me deeply, and I am angry at myself for feeling pained, because I think I ought to have faith in his love for me, and trust him fully. There is no happy love without this faith, Frank, and no woman has a right to marry without it, yet we cannot compel it to exist. Had this been possible, I should have faith in Charles now, instead of this unsatisfied longing, this disappointed feeling which has no name. The fault may be in myself. It may be that I am suspicious and jealous by nature; and if this is so, it is well I should learn it now, and strive with all my might to conquer these despicable traits, which not only bring misery upon a woman herself, but also upon all those whom she loves, and who love her."

I could not answer her. To have said what was in my thoughts—that it was no jealousy, no suspicion, that had caused her to doubt—seemed dishonorable, for I loved this woman, Charly's promised wife, not with the calm, friendly affection she imagined I felt for her, but with the warmth and reverence of my whole heart.

With the beginning of August the weather grew intensely warm, and our only relief through the day was our refreshing salt-water bath. Mrs. Lang and the young ladies would take their bath first, and then Charles and myself would take ours, for Mrs. Lang was of the old school, and propriety itself, and she did not approve of ladies and gentlemen bathing together.

One morning Mabel came to me—it was near their bathing time, and I was surprised at her seeking me at that hour.

"Frank," she said, sitting down near me, "it has ended at last; my engagement with Charly is broken."

"Was it your own doing, Mabel?" I inquired.

"No," she replied quietly; "it was his wish. And since he had the wish in his heart, I am glad he was brave and candid enough to come and tell me of it. It is best for us both that we learned the truth before it was too late."

"Yes," I said, "it is best."

She leaned her arms on the table before her and bowed her head down upon them. A very woman after all, I thought as I looked at her, for she was weeping.

A few moments passed over, and I heard Mrs. Lang's voice calling her from the piazza. Mabel raised her head.

"I had forgotten it was our bathing hour," she said, and left the room. And soon after, I saw her accompanying her mother and Flora to the beach.

For the next half hour I sat just where she had left me, with my heart full of many anxious thoughts.

Suddenly a cry broke out on the still air, shrill, sharp, and full of terror. It was Mrs. Lang's voice, and with rapid steps I gained the window. At a glance I took in the whole scene. I saw Flora Allen's fair head rise above the water in the distance, as she was carried on by the waves, and I saw Mabel, with long, even strokes swimming rapidly after her. I waited not to take a second glance, and gained the beach not a moment too soon, for Mabel stretched out her hand to grasp Flora, and she with the despair of death clutched her, and dragged her under. I jumped into the boat—which was still anchored off the rocks—and rowed swiftly out. I glanced over my shoulder. They were both down! But even then I saw the head I loved so well rise above the water, and a few more strokes brought me close to her, and I grasped Mabel firmly, and tried to release her from the clutch which was drowning her. With a mighty effort I set her free, and drew her into the boat, and then caught Flora and laid her beside her. I dared not look at the brave white face, so strangely still, till I reached the shore.

Charles was standing there supporting Mrs. Lang, and leaving him to see to Flora, I carried Mabel to the house. It was long before her eyes unclosed; but when they did, they rested on me a moment, and I felt she knew I had saved her.

Mrs. Lang told us how it all happened. Flora had ventured foolishly beyond her depth. The tide was running very swiftly, and in spite of her efforts to regain her footing she was carried out. Mabel at once swam out to save her.

"But," said Mrs. Lang gratefully, "if it had not been for your presence of mind, both would have been lost."

Careful nursing is a wonderful doctor, and both the girls were soon well again. Charles hovered between the two, sometimes devoting himself to Mabel, sometimes to Flora. I saw he did not know his own mind, but was dazzled by Flora's pink and white beauty, yet held in bondage by Mabel's noble soul, and I was not surprised one evening to overhear, unwillingly, his plea to Mabel to renew their engagement; neither did her answer astonish me.

"I am sorry you have spoken to me thus, Charles," she said kindly. "It was your own wish our engagement should cease; but now that it has ceased, I have no desire to renew it, for," she said bravely, "I no longer love you."

"No," he answered angrily. "I suppose you love Frank now."

She made no reply to his taunting words, and after a moment he said:

"Well, I know who does love me, if you do not."

And he left the room and sought Flora, who was sitting on the piazza.

We were a little surprised, the following morning, to find Charles had taken his departure before breakfast. If Flora knew the cause, she gave no explanation. Yet, as she announced her engagement with a Mr. Durand from the South that same day, I presume she intended us to know she had refused him.

And what of Mabel and myself? you ask.

I remained at N—— till the autumn, but spoke no word of love to Mabel; I could not so have wounded her. But that was three years ago, and this summer my wife and I are going to N—— to visit her mother; so, of course, you see I married Mabel.

PEEPS AT MY NEIGHBORS.

BY FRANCES HENSHAW BADEN.

"Is Mrs. Hammond in?" I asked, of the pleasant looking girl who, in answer to my ring, opened the hall door.

"Yes, marm. But—" The girl hesitated. "Come in, marm," she continued.

I hesitated then, feeling there was something which would prevent my visit being very agreeable, perhaps.

"Come in, marm; and plase excuse me if I take you into the sitting-room. And all littered it is, sure. But the marster is up in the parlor with his head, sure."

Of course I was pleased to be assured that my friend's husband still held possession of that very important article, although, to be sure, I had not been *very anxious* on the subject, as just now, in our own blessed land, the dread seems to be of having a head *put on*, instead of taken off. I smiled, following Norah in, saying:

"I shall not be frightened by the looks of your sitting-room, Norah. Our little ones seem decidedly opposed to a tidy looking room; so I shall feel quite at home."

"Yes, marm. Thank you. It's the childers that have done it, sure. And no help for it neither; for their mother told me to let thim be doing of anything but making of a noise."

I pretty well understood what the trouble was before my friend came down. After greeting me in her usual gentle, sweet manner, she said:

"You have come to give me the long-promised pleasure—to spend the day. Take off your hat and wrappings;" approaching and beginning to remove my furs.

"Evelyn, stop! You know that it will not be at all agreeable to have me remain; but you are too polite and hospitable to say so," I said.

"Not very agreeable to *you*, most likely; and my pleasure will be very much marred. Norah has told you how much Herbert is suffering with his head? I have to be with him constantly during these spells. His only relief is afforded by my rubbing. But at times the pain almost ceases, and I can run down to look after the children. Now, if you will stay, I shall be glad; and if you can manage to amuse yourself in any way until the evening, or about sunset, then I can be with you. Herbert's pain is generally quite gone by that time," Evelyn said.

Thinking I could probably be of service, I agreed to remain.

"Now I must go back," she said; adding, "Babies, try not to be very noisy."

She hastened up stairs. Throwing off my wrappings, I soon busied myself with the children—telling them stories, and cutting out of paper, to order, men, women and numberless animals. To distinguish the dogs from horses or cats myself, I had to write the name on each. But the little ones were remarkably bright and very imaginative, and saw the wonderful likeness of each to some animal they knew of the kind.

A little while, and Norah came in, saying:

"Now I'll be after making this room a little dacent, sure. And in the kitchen the breakfast dishes all stared at me with their dirty faces, a shaming me all the time. But it's all in their places and clean I've put them now."

Telling the good-natured girl, no matter about doing up the room, I should attend to it myself after getting through with my work of creating a deal of litter, as well as men and beasts, I dismissed her to more necessary work. Very soon after, came the boys from school. Two merry, noisy fellows they were; and were just dashing up the steps to find "mamma," when Norah, rushing after, caught them both in one embrace, and landed them before me, saying:

"Pray kape them here. When their father is home with his head, no one but the mistress dare go in the room. I'll give them a bite; and you too, if ye plase, marm."

Understanding what Norah meant, and thinking, by accepting her offer, I should somewhat relieve Evelyn of any anxiety as to my comfort, I thanked her, and turned to greet the boys.

As if to explain the state of affairs, and likewise offer some excuse for their submitting to what they seemed to fear might appear to me an indignity, Fred., the elder, after whispering to Charley, "I'll tell her," said:

"Papa is awful nervous when he has the headache, and mamma tells us we must be very quiet, or," shaking his curly head, "I'd gone for Norah when she caught us so."

"'Deed we would," chimed in Charley.

Norah gave us a really nice lunch, apologizing for everything being cold, except a very excellent cup of tea. Light biscuit, chipped beef, cake and preserves were before us, when again Evelyn slipped in, kissed her boys, giving them loving words of commendation for being so good, and Norah for being so attentive and thoughtful. She could not be induced by the daughter of Erin to "take a bite" herself. But accepting the cup of tea offered, she said:

"I'll take it up with me. Do try and make a lunch, dear. Norah finds it impossible to do much cooking, when she has the children to mind. In truth, when Herbert comes home with the headache, everything is stopped to keep the house quiet. I never feel like eating when he is suffering so, and the children are satisfied with what Norah can find for them."

Again she flitted away, and Norah muttered:

"A starving of herself, and to-morrow it will be sick enough she is; and thin what?"

"She will be as well cared for as *she* cares for Mr. Hammond, I trust," I replied.

With a very significant elevation of the naturally turned-up nose, and a toss of the amber-hued head, Norah went out. Returning a few moments after with water and a towel, she washed the boys' faces and hands. Then giving an apple to each, she bade them "be off."

Late in the afternoon Evelyn came down, a relieved expression on her face as she said:

"I'm so glad! he is better, and will be quite well after we give him something to eat."

Norah was dispatched on an errand.

In an almost incredibly short time we were sitting with Mr. Hammond to a nice supper. Beefsteak, broiled just as it should be, for the convalescent; fried oysters for the others. I noticed that Evelyn eat but little, and feared, as Norah said, she would be sick herself. Mr. Hammond bore unmistakable signs of the suffering through which he had passed. He told me those spells were quite frequent. The evening was spent very pleasantly, and ended by Norah's escorting me to my home, which was not very distant.

The next day, being a little anxious about my friend, and having business in the neighborhood, I decided to call for a few moments to inquire if she was well.

I found her lying on a lounge in the sitting-room, suffering terribly with her head. Through the opened door I smelt the dinner, and heard Norah hurrying around. The little ones were trying to be quiet, but every now and then a box of tin toys came tumbling down, or a little chair was overturned, making noise sufficient to startle a well person with ordinarily strong nerves. She tried to rise to welcome me. I saw how much the effort cost her, and begging her to remain quiet, I asked:

"Why do you stay down here? Do let me help you up to bed."

"I must, until the boys get home to take care of the little ones. Norah has dinner to get. Herbert never likes to wait for it," she panted.

Norah came in, removed the cloth from the burning brow, and wetting it in the ice-water near, placed it gently back, at the same time receiving some instructions relative to the dinner.

Very soon Mr. Hammond came in. After greeting me, he asked:

"No better yet, Evie?"

She shook her head, and he continued, turning to me:

"You see we both have very troublesome heads."

As Norah was dishing her dinner, he began talking about the most interesting topics of the day. Drawing from his pocket a paper, he read an extract or two.

Seeing this added to poor Evie's suffering, I proposed again she should go up stairs.

"Certainly; you are right. I could not stand these children's noise. Let me take you up," Herbert said, for a moment recalled to the fact of his wife's suffering.

She arose to go, saying she could get along very well. He must eat his dinner, which was ready then. I accompanied her, and making her as comfortable as possible, was about taking my leave, when in came little Evie crying, Carrie after her, lisping:

"Papa make us tum up. Papa says he tan't weed when we bodder him so."

"Oh, you should try and not bother papa so much, darling," Evelyn said, in a voice that told how much she was suffering.

I managed to draw them from her to a distant part of the room, giving them some pictures she bade me get. Again quiet was partially obtained.

Fifteen minutes might have passed thus, when Mr. Hammond came in, bringing with him the perfume of a fine Havanna.

"Oh, Herbert, dear, please don't smoke," Evelyn moaned.

"Sure enough. I forgot about your head. There, it is out. I just ran up to tell you I'm going out for a walk—over to look at the tunnel. Do the children annoy you? Norah might keep them down stairs now. I will be back in about an hour."

Bowing to me and smiling, he went out. I could not stay another moment, my engagement for the evening forbidding. Taking with me the babies, I promised to give them in charge of Norah. I found the girl busy clearing up the dinner-table.

"Can you keep these little ones down here, Norah?" I asked.

"Sure, and I can," answered Norah. "But it's *himself* that *might* have stayed home, and not been after going away at all."

"Gentlemen do not think about such things, Norah. You know they can't be expected to," I said.

"Sure, and it's myself that knows the difference it makes when it's *his* head. And it's not so long a time, at all, that *he* should be forgetting of it, sure! But what can ye expect of a man? It's Norah O'Brien that's had the trial of one, sure! and they're *all alike*. They be after knowing what aches and pains are when they're having thim themselves, sure. And they don't *think* any other time. It's not their nature at all," Norah said.

And I bade her good-bye, going my way and pondering over Norah's words, "*All* men are alike;" believing, myself, to the contrary. *Some* are thoughtful; a *few* as gentle and kind as women, I know.

A CONFIRMED BACHELOR.

BY ANNA SHEILDS.

"Fearful extravagance! I never saw anything like it!"

Mrs. Jerome Watson spoke with emphasis and feeling, and Mr. John Cox heard her meekly, with a faint smile hovering around his lips.

"What is it now, Fanny?" he asked, looking up from his newspaper at his sister's flushed face.

"Eliza!"

The word was fairly popped out of Mrs. Watson's mouth, and Mr. Cox seemed to fully understand all it implied.

"Eliza suits me," he said lazily. "She keeps the house in order, cooks superbly, and never bothers."

"Keeps the house in order!" said Mrs. Watson, with supreme scorn. "The dust under the sofas, bureaus and beds is an inch thick. As for cooking, do you know, brother John, the waste that goes on in your kitchen?"

"But, Fanny—"

"I will speak," was the rejoinder that cut short the contemplated remonstrance. "If I did not come over now and then, and exercise some little supervision, I believe Eliza would make you pay for food enough to support a family of ten. John Cox," and the tone was now awful in its solemnity, "you must get a wife."

"No, I thank you, Fan."

"But, John, do listen to reason. You are rich, and you ought to have a family around you. You are nearly forty now, and it really is time you had a wife, if you ever intend to have one."

"But if I never do intend to have one, Fanny?"

"And leave your money to a charity hospital, or an alms-house."

"I might do worse."

"You might do better. Come now, John, just think what a nice lot of girls you met last winter at my parties. There was Jennie Stiles."

"Snub nose! Fan., I abhor a snub nose."

"Well, Lizzie Bates has a pure Grecian profile."

"And sandy hair. If there is one thing more detestable than another, it is sandy hair."

"Julia Stone has hair as brown as a chestnut."

"And gray eyes. Fan., do you know I did 'seriously incline' to Julia Stone until I saw her weep, when I discovered that her eyes were that peculiar shade of gray that shades to a lively green in hours of moist tribulation."

"John, you are incorrigible. But I had hopes of you when you were sending hot-house bouquets and handsomely bound volumes of the poets to Mrs. Gordon. She was so handsome, and so superior in every way."

"Fan., never tell I told you. She wrote! She was literary. Fancy poor me with a wife detailing the conjugal felicities of Sophia and Alfred upon superfine foolscap, while John went without his dinner. Ugh! The first sight of what she called her literary trifles drove me from the field."

"Well, Josephine Darcy is not literary."

"No; she is just one remove from an idiot."

"But, John, you will never find a perfect woman. Every man's wife falls short of his ideal. What can you say against that little daisy, Laura Murray."

"Just that she *is* a daisy, a bread-and-butter miss."

"You are right, John; her sixteen years would not suit well with your forty summers. She is too young."

"Oh, as for that, I am not so very old, Fanny. My eyes are ignorant yet of crow's-feet, and my hair unstreaked by gray."

"And Laura's nose is a decided snub, John."

"Not at all. *Retroussée*, Fanny."

"And her hair is sandy."

"Fanny! Her hair is perfect golden in color. In sunlight it is a tint to drive an artist wild with enthusiasm."

"I think Honora Tevis would suit you better, John. She is more mature."

"I should think so! She is fifty if she is a day, and she dresses hideously. I am sure Venus herself would be odious in that green dress and red shawl, and the soles of her boots are two inches thick."

"Well, John, I give it up. I will try to resign myself to the fact that you are a confirmed old bachelor."

And with this parting shot, Mrs. Watson took her flounces and feathers from her brother's sight, to bestow the vision of their magnificence upon Mr. Watson and three olive-branches who awaited her at home.

She smiled often as she drove homeward, and once or twice nodded her head as if well pleased at some unspoken suggestion of her busy brain. It was the dearest wish of her heart to see her brother John married, and for many long years she had tried to accomplish this end. It only caused her to speak her vehement indignation when it was suggested that a bachelor uncle would probably bestow large legacies upon the little Watsons. She did not want John's money, she would declare truthfully. She wanted to see dear John himself happily married, with children of his own to inherit his fortune.

The conversation above recorded shows how far from successful she had been; but a luminous idea was now busy in her mind, and she proceeded to act upon it.

"John," she said, when he strolled into her parlor the next evening, "we are going to the Groves next week; when are you coming?"

"I think I shall travel this summer, Fan."

"Now, John, you will give us one month first. Come, do promise?"

"But, Fan., you always have so much company."

"If you will come, I won't have anybody at all—not a young lady. I have teased you awfully about a wife, John, but I will let you alone after this. You may live and die in single blessedness, if you really desire it."

"Then I will come. But you told me last time we spoke of the Groves, that Miss Murray was going with you for a month."

"Oh, she is such a mere child; a snub-nosed, sandy-haired, bread-and-butter miss, scarcely out of the school-room. Of course I am not so absurd as to suppose you will pay attention to her. Still, if you wish it, I will postpone her visit till you are gone."

"O no. Don't alter your arrangements on my account. She will not interfere with me."

Mrs. Watson had called Laura Murray a daisy, and a very bright, fresh one she looked, as she stood upon the wide porch at the Groves, the morning after her arrival. She was very fair, with large gray eyes, and a profusion of light hair, just sufficiently tinged with red to be sandy, yet glossy, waving and pretty in its free unbound masses. Her figure was graceful, and she was a lady in every word and look, while yet a free-hearted child in many respects.

She looked upon the middle-aged bachelor brother of her hostess with respectful liking, which developed into cordial good feeling in a few days. He was so kind, she thought gratefully: would carry her drawing book for her to all the nicest places for sketching; drove her out day after day, and even indulged her in what Mrs. Watson declared a perfectly insane desire, namely, a canter upon his own favorite horse Thunderer. Then in his trips to town he always remembered a package of candies for the children, and a separate dainty box for the biggest child of all, as Mrs. Watson would call her, as she enjoyed her share of sweets.

Cunning Mrs. Watson! Not a word or hint now dropped from her lips to her brother upon the often discussed subject of matrimony. Somewhat ostentatiously she would beg him not to allow Laura to take him from his paper or cigar. She drew his attention to the fact that Laura actually wrapped a scarlet shawl around her when she wore a shimmering green tissue that suited her creamy complexion to perfection. She shuddered herself at the thick soles of Laura's walking boots, and commented upon the fact that crying made Laura's eyes green.

And John would sometimes admit, sometimes combat these facts, and still devote the long leisure hours of a country life to Laura.

The promised month was nearly over, and Fanny pleaded for a few weeks more of her brother's society.

"Don't leave me now, John, when I am going to make the house pleasant."

"It is pleasant enough, Fan."

"You are a dear good fellow to say so, but I know how you must have been bored, John. Dancing attendance upon a school-girl must have been simply horrible for a man of your fastidious refinement."

"Not at all. Besides, Miss Murray has left school."

"But she is so young yet. I am sure her unformed mind can never offer companionship for yours."

"There is a great deal of undeveloped power there, Fan. She brings a fresh, vivacious intelligence to bear upon almost every subject. A few years of foreign travel would do wonders for her."

"I think you are very kind to speak of her in that way, John. Poor little thing, she is very plain."

"Plain, Fan.! plain! You never saw a more exquisite complexion, and her eyes are most expressive and brilliant."

"But green, in tears, John. And such boots!"

"Good gracious, Fan.! you would not have the child tramping about the country lanes and roads in paper-soled slippers, would you? She shows her sense in wearing good strong shoes."

"Of course. I approve of sense, and Laura has, as you say, considerable. I think, if she wished to cultivate her talent, she would soon write very well. Some of her letters home are really literary gems, they are so original and vivacious. But I hope the poor child will never be literary."

"Why not? Why should not a woman develop any power or talent she possesses?"

"But, John, how if her husband wants his dinner while Amelia and Paul are in agonies of separation upon paper?"

"Let her husband wait! He must be a nice fellow if he lets his own coarse appetite interfere with the outpourings of genius. But I cannot talk any longer now, Fan. I promised Laura a drive. Will *she* stay any longer, Fanny?"

"O yes; all next month."

"Well, don't engage my room for anybody for a week or two, Fan. I am not quite ready to start upon my travels yet," and John went out.

He was scarcely out of sight when Mrs. Watson twisted around and astonished young Watson in an impromptu waltz, singing:

"Oh, John, John, you are very far gone."

Before retiring that night, she paid a visit to Laura's room, and with wily purpose brought the conversation to bear upon her brother.

"He is a nice old dear," she said.

"Old! Why, Mrs. Watson, surely you do not call Mr. Cox an old man!"

"No; but he is middle-aged and fussy."

"How is he fussy? I thought he was always courteous and gentle."

"But he has such odd ways."

"They must be generous, honorable ways, and they are so uncommon I suppose they do seem odd."

"But still you know, Laura, a man of his age does get fussy, settled opinions, especially if he is a confirmed old bachelor."

"But, Mrs. Watson, he—he—you know—perhaps— Is he a confirmed old bachelor?" she said desperately at last.

"Oh, yes, dear; John will never marry. He has told me so."

"But to-day, when we were riding—you know he took me out—and—"

"Yes, dear. I know he is very kind about taking you out."

"But—when we were riding to-day— I am sure you can't be more astonished than I was."

"My dear, there is nothing astonishing in John's taking you to ride," said wicked Mrs. Watson, not helping the young girl one atom in her confessions, but inwardly longing to smother her with kisses.

"No—" and the crimson flushes chased each other prettily upon Laura's rounded, dimpled cheeks—"but to-day—as we were out, he—he—please don't be angry—he asked me to marry him!"

Then Mrs. Watson did catch the blushing, happy girl into her own motherly arms, and give her warm, sisterly welcome to her new honors, sure, from all signs and omens, that love, and love only, prompted the hearts of the pretty daisy Laura Murray and John Cox, no longer a CONFIRMED BACHELOR.

—Like the rainbow, peace rests upon the earth, but its arch is lost in heaven. Heaven bathes it in hues of light—it springs up amid tears and clouds—it is a reflection of the eternal sun—it is an assurance of calm—it is the sign of a great covenant between God and man—it is an emanation from the distant orb of immortal light.

GOING TO SEA.

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

Boys *will* go to sea, and my boy with the rest!
He has shipped for a year—God knows if it's best!
But out of the harbor, and down the bright bay,
With canvas unfurled, the proud ship sailed away—
Sailed away, as in triumph; while, lonely and sad,
I lingered and watched my brave-hearted lad.

I watched the boy figure that paced the worn deck,
'Till, in the far distance, it seemed a mere speck:
I watched the white 'kerchief that waved its farewell
Still far, farther on, as the waves rose and fell:
Manly form, cheery face, jaunty cap, sailor blue,
Were all strangely blended, then lost to my view.

For long weary months, his out-look will be
But the blue of the sky, and the blue of the sea;
The sun and the breeze will caress his fair brow,
But his mother can press no kisses there now;
He will lie down to sleep with *no* fond "good-night"
From loved ones who've made his home life so bright.

Will his heart yearn for home as the dove for its nest?
Will love for us all ever glow in his breast?
Will fancy wreathe still the old house with the flowers
Of affection, that gladdened his childhood's sweet hours?
And if these home thoughts chance to lighten his care,
Will memory's bells call him sometimes to prayer?

Will his manhood be guileless, free from censure and blame?
Will he live so that *no* blot shall sully his name?
No act cause his mother to blush for the boy
Who has never been yet but a blessing and joy?
And back to the hearth-stone, unstained, will he bring
A heart just as pure as in youth's early Spring?

God be with you, my boy, in your vessel at sea;
May my prayers your anchor of safety e'er be!
Love shall spread its broad pinions and fly to your side,
To guide your good ship o'er the swift-rolling tide:
Though the months glide to years, my faith shall not sleep,
But ceaseless, untiring, its brave watch shall keep.

Your place in my heart no other shall fill;
Your seat by the fireside is waiting you still;
The silence that darkens your own boyhood's room,
Is waiting your presence to lighten its gloom:
We will guard each memento your hands have caressed,
And keep sacred to love every treasure you've blessed.

I shall sit by my window and wait you, dear boy;
Your coming will fill all the household with joy!
The slow, tardy hours will take themselves wings,
When I greet the loved child to whom my heart clings:
Then speed the day, darling; I will pray till you come,
"God keep my dear sailor-boy, and bring him safe home."

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THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

HERBERT SPENCER'S SWEETHEART.

When Hester entered the house, after her interview with Spencer, she went into the kitchen, where she found Eunice ready to wait on her. The girl regarded her in a curious, stealthy way, but she was too much occupied with her own thoughts to remark it. After taking a cup of tea, she went into the room in which her mother lay sleeping heavily.

Hester closed the door carefully behind her, and approached the side of the bed on which Mrs. Blake lay. She took into her own the nerveless hand that rested on the coverlet, and pressing it closely, murmured in the ear of the sleeper:

"Mother, it is I. Arouse yourself a moment from this lethargy, and speak to me before I go."

Mrs. Blake's eyes half unclosed at this appeal, and she seemed to have a hazy consciousness of the sense of Hester's words. She faintly muttered:

"You are on the edge of the precipice, and my hand placed you there. Let it draw you back before you topple over, and all is lost. Don't go—don't leave me. Oh! I cannot bear to give you up."

The words were so low that Hester was forced to bend her head to catch their sense, and she saw that the speaker was sinking again into the deep sleep from which her voice had temporarily aroused her. She made a few passes over the pale face with both her hands, using her magnetic power to deepen the trance in which her mother's senses were bound.

"'Still harping on my daughter,'" she quoted. "It is best so, and Dr. Macon was right to place it beyond her power to arrest my departure."

She stooped and kissed her twice, and then moved to the opposite side of the bed and looked down on the girl whose place she had usurped. With a smile of triumph, she said:

"Good-bye, Hester Blake, for that is henceforth *your* name. As the poor widow's daughter *you* will be known to men, while *I* take your station, fortune, and what is best worth having of all, your lover. Adieu, my sister; to God I can safely leave you, and to the keeping of those who will have my interests too deeply at heart to permit you to interfere with them in any way."

She moved away, casting a swift glance at her mother, but not attempting again to approach her. On opening the door, Hester found Eunice lingering near it, though she had not ventured to open it. She made a sign to her, went into the kitchen, and took from her pocket a bright gold eagle, which she had obtained from Macon as a present for the girl.

When Eunice understood that this was for herself, she looked both pleased and bewildered. She had never possessed so large a sum of money at one time in her life before, and she took the fair hand that offered it and carried it to her lips; but there was a strange expression of doubt and fear upon her face as she did so.

She made rapid signs toward the shed room, but Hester affected not to understand them, and hastened away, wondering if the dull mind of this girl had admitted a suspicion of the truth. She must warn Macon to keep a sharp eye on her, and she wrote on a scrap of paper torn from the edge of the letter she had written at her father's dictation:

"Eunice Barker is not quite satisfied as to my identity; find means to make her so, or to silence her."

The articles of dress she had ordered were lying on the bed, and she threw the shawl around her, put on the bonnet with its shrouding folds of crape, and drew on the gloves. The carriage in which Spencer came had drawn up to the gate, and he and Macon were standing near the door awaiting her appearance.

Hester drew near the latter, offered him her hand, and at the same time pressed the note she had written into his. She softly said:

"I have to thank you for your kindness, Dr. Macon, till I can offer you something more substantial. In a few days you will hear from me, and I shall keep up a regular correspondence with Mrs. Blake. I can never forget her goodness to me, nor what her daughter has suffered through her efforts to serve me. I shall prove, to both her and to you, that I know how to be grateful."

Macon bowed low over her hand, and with great show of respect, replied:

"I have no doubt you will do so, Miss Landry, and I shall always remember my fair patient with interest. I hope that you will not suffer from travelling, while hardly in a state to do so with safety."

"I feel quite able to undertake this journey, Doctor; so dismiss your fears on my account. Pray let me know how Miss Blake comes on, for I am deeply interested in her recovery."

Macon promised all that she wished, and she gave her hand to Spencer, and sprang into the carriage with a glad sense of release.

A few moments later they were rolling away through the woodland, and Macon stood staring after the vehicle with a vague presentiment that in losing sight of his fiancée, he was relinquishing his hold upon her fate.

He glanced down at last upon the paper she had left in his hand, but the light was too dim to enable him to read it. He went back into the house, and found a candle burning in the front room. After glancing at the words Hester had traced, he tore the paper into minute fragments, and threw them into the fireplace.

Knowing how important it might be to be able to communicate with Eunice in the only language she understood, he had, within the last twenty-four hours, learned from Hester the dumb alphabet, and he now went into the kitchen, and made Eunice understand that Mrs. Blake and her sick daughter would return to her cottage in the morning; that Eunice was to be permanently installed there, and eight dollars a month paid to her for her services to the young lady.

The girl opened her eyes wide at this magnificent prospect, for she had never hitherto received more than a dollar a week for such service as she was capable of rendering. She nodded her head, smiled, and seemed ready to dance with delight as she signified her acceptance of the offer.

"Umph! Hester was too easily alarmed," he muttered. "The girl suspects nothing, and if she does, she is too stupid to make others comprehend the stupendous fraud that has been so easily accomplished. I declare I feel as if I am in a dream, but it is one from which the awakening will be very delightful. The girl of my heart will come to me endowed with a brilliant fortune, and we shall be able to defy the world to prove that it has been unfairly won."

Macon glanced into the shed room as he passed out, and signed to Eunice that she was to remain with the two who might need her in the night, and then, utterly worn out with loss of sleep and the various excitements through which he had passed within the last forty-eight hours, he threw himself, dressed as he was, on the bed in the front room, and fell into a deep and dreamless sleep.

As the carriage rolled away, Hester sunk back with a sigh of relief, and said:

"I am so glad to get away from that place, and the gloomy associations connected with it. I think I should have died if I had been forced to remain there much longer. I cannot be too grateful to you, Herbert, for coming so promptly to my assistance."

"I was bound to do so, Estelle, so you owe me no gratitude. It is a pleasure to me to be able to do anything for you, both on your own account and on that of Raymond. I shall write to him to-morrow, and tell him of the melancholy casualty from which you so narrowly escaped. A steamer goes out on Saturday, and the letter will be sent on by his Paris banker to his present address. Even if he is as far off as St. Petersburg, he can be with you in little more than two months, and he will be sure to set out for this country as soon as he hears of your father's death."

"Yes—that will be his first impulse; but I shall also write, and insist that he shall not hurry back on my account under six months. That time at least must elapse before I can give him my hand."

"So you said before, but Ray's eloquence will soon convince you that all that is nonsense. From the way he went on when he found that your father would not consent to your marriage before his departure for Europe, I know he will fly back as soon as he hears of Mr. Landry's death, and insist on his right to claim you at once. The poor fellow has suffered enough on your account, and you would not surely have the heart to tantalize him with any further delay. When he went down to Newport to bid you farewell, I really pitied the state of his mind. His mother insisted that he should travel, and he dreaded the thought of leaving you to be made love to by others. He, however, wrote me a line from New York, telling me that his fears were at rest on your account, and he went away with a lighter heart than he had believed possible, but with no less reluctance than he had felt before seeing you. You know best what pledges you gave him, and what he has a right to claim from you when he comes."

"Yes—I know," said Hester faintly, for she began to have a dread that she did *not* know all that was necessary to enable her to make sure of the position she had so eagerly grasped. If anything happened now through her own want of tact, she felt that she was lost and ruined forever. She recovered her self-control, and went on:

"Poor Ray! he was so much distressed, and so absurdly jealous, that I said all that was possible to give him faith in my constancy. If he insists on a speedy union, I suppose he will have his own way, as he always does. But let us not speak any more of him. I feel that he is the master of my fate, and he must settle it as he pleases, for I shall never have strength to oppose him when we stand face to face. Tell me something of the lady who is to be my companion. I already feel a great interest in Mrs. Oliver, and I am sure that I shall love her very dearly when I once know her."

"I am quite sure of that, for she is one of the most charming of women. You have already discovered that I think her even more than that, and I have no hesitation in placing before you the whole state of the case. Marion Ross and myself have been attached to each other from childhood. When she was seventeen, and I twenty-two, we promised to marry each other when the time came in which it would be prudent to do so.

"The prospect was not very bright, for I was only a clerk in my brother's establishment, with a limited salary, and little prospect of having my wages raised, or assistance in any form afforded me, as long as I clung to the girl of my heart.

"My brother had married a rich woman, and all my family, except my grandmother, insisted that I must do the same. Marion was not only destitute of fortune, but she had a disreputable old father who drank to excess, and made her miserable in every way. Mr. Ross was an Englishman, and he had a life annuity which enabled him to live and educate his daughter, and all her accomplishments were bestowed with a view to enable her to win her own livelihood when he was taken away from her.

"When he heard of our engagement he was as bitter against it as any of my own family could be, for the old man thought a poor clerk no match for his pretty daughter. His opposition, however, was soon over, for he died in a fit of mania brought on by drinking, and Marion was left homeless, and nearly destitute. My grandmother had always been fond of her, and she wrote to my aunt De Lorme to give her employment as a governess in her family.

"To make a long story short, my poor girl accepted the situation offered her, and went to Louisiana. My aunt, you know, is a very worldly woman, and she was as much opposed to the match as any of my relatives, though I was not then aware of the fact. She acquired much influence over Marion, and finally convinced her that it was her duty to break off all communication with me, and accept a young planter in the neighborhood who was most earnest in his efforts to please her. She was made to believe that I was anxious for an avenue of escape to be opened to me, and only held to my promises to her through a sense of honor. Every argument that could move a proud and sensitive woman was used, and the end was, that she was goaded and persuaded to place an impassable barrier between us by giving her hand to Tom Oliver.

"He soon discovered that she had no love for him, and he treated her so badly that there was no chance for her to learn the lesson she had set for herself when she married him. For four months her bondage lasted, then Oliver died of one of the fevers of the country; and it was found, after his death, that she could claim nothing from his estate. The law of Louisiana gives the wife all that she has brought into the wedded partnership, and half the acquests and gains from the day of her marriage. Marion had brought nothing but herself, and in the few months of her married life nothing had been made, so she was entitled to claim nothing; but the heir gave her two thousand dollars, and with that small sum she came back to Boston, where she has since lived with some distant relations."

"And she and you have met, and made up, I suppose," said Hester, smiling.

"The attraction that draws us together is too strong to be resisted," he replied, in a tone that was almost fierce. "At first I thought I could never forgive her, and I held myself aloof from her; but one day I found her with my grandmother when I called to see her. Marion's pale face and wistful eyes appealed to me so powerfully that I was ready to forgive her even before pardon was asked. I went home with her, and she told me the whole story of her unhappy marriage, and what had led to it. I execrated my aunt, but I forgave Marion, and reinstated her in her old place in my heart.

"I have not asked her to marry me, for her husband has been dead scarcely a year, but I have been working steadily for that end. I confided to Raymond what I have now told you, and he declared it to be his duty to repair the wrong his mother had caused. He used his purse and his influence to place me as partner in a flourishing New Orleans house, and my only regret in going there was, that I must leave Marion behind me for a season.

"You now can understand why I so eagerly grasped at the chance of placing her with you. She will be near enough for me to visit her occasionally, and in a few months I can claim her as my own, for without words we fully understand each other, and when I hold out my hand, and say 'Come,' she will not refuse to do so."

"Thank you for this confidence, Herbert. I feel that I am going to claim a friend and sister in this fair Marion, who has suffered so much. I will take her to my heart, and make her feel that my home is also hers. I shall not be alone in the solitude of Le Bocage; thanks to you, I shall have a congenial companion, who will make the time pass on less leaden wings than I anticipated when I first thought of immuring myself there. You will visit us occasionally, for you can run up on the New Orleans packet at any time."

"I am only afraid that I shall make my appearance oftener than may be considered quite consistent with propriety," replied Herbert, laughing. "If I dared, I would run up to the plantation and spend every Sunday; but if I did that, my aunt would be down upon me at once. I wish she wasn't your nearest neighbor, for she will be looking after you, and meddling with both you and Marion, because you are both young, and you are to be her daughter. Aunt Carry is an excellent woman, and I have the highest respect for her; but I own that I am afraid of the influence she manages to establish over all young people who are thrown into intimate association with her. Witness the match she persuaded my poor Marion into, in spite of her attachment to me. I can never quite forgive her for that, though I must keep on fair terms with her for Raymond's sake. He felt his mother's conduct to me very keenly, for he is as proud of as he is fond of her, and he could not bear to think she would do what she did to prevent her nephew from making what she considered a very bad match."

"I have seen Mrs. De Lorme in my childhood, and I remember her perfectly as a very handsome, haughty woman, who thought her own children superior to those of any other person."

"I hardly thought my aunt had shown that side of her character to *you*, Estelle, for it was her desire from your infancy that you and Ray should be united. She and your father were the firmest friends, and after my uncle's death our family thought it not unlikely that they would mutually console each other for the losses they had sustained. The news of Mr. Landry's death will be a severe blow to her, and she will be as kind to you as if you already stood in the relation of a daughter to her. But why do I tell you all these things, for you must know as much about them, or more, than I do?"

"I have been away from Louisiana so long, that the recollection of people and things there has in a measure faded from my mind. I am interested in what you say, and as I am going back to live among my early friends, I shall be glad to have old memories revived."

"What will Mrs. Murray say to your escapade? She will be very much taken by surprise when she hears that you have actually set out for the South, without going to Newport to take leave of her and your sister."

"I shall be sorry to offend my aunt, but with me a promise is a sacred thing, and I pledged my word to my dear father to take his remains to Louisiana and see them placed in the vault with those of my mother. You know how we build tombs above ground there, and in hers a place was consecrated for himself; an addition was made to it when his last wife was placed there, and he will lie between the two."

Hester bent down her head and buried her face in her heavy vail, as if overcome with the sad emotions the theme suggested, and Herbert respected her feelings sufficiently to remain silent till she herself resumed the conversation by again referring to her Southern home, and the friends from whom she had been so long parted.

With consummate tact she drew from Spencer many details it was important to her to know; and he, anxious to beguile her sorrow as much as possible, talked on in his free, unembarrassed way, every sentence fraught with information that Hester knew was invaluable to her in her new position.

When they reached the village no stop was made at the hotel, as Spencer had settled his bill there, and they got out at the station to wait for the arrival of the train. The weather was so warm Hester took a seat upon the platform, and thus escaped the scrutiny of the few town's-people who were lingering about the place. She kept her vail closely drawn, and spoke to her companion in such guarded tones that no one could have recognized her voice, if one who knew it should have chanced to approach her.

In twenty minutes after their arrival the whistle was heard, and the train came thundering up to the platform. Spencer already had the check for her baggage, and they found many vacant seats when they entered the ladies' car. Hester was soon comfortably placed, and with a long sigh of relief, she felt herself whirled away from the scenes that had been so long familiar to her, to begin the new and brilliant life to which she so eagerly looked forward.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN UNPLEASANT RECOGNITION.

The travellers reached Jersey City in time to make the change and catch the night express train for Boston; and then Hester breathed more freely.

Already had she changed from the Hester Blake who first appeared in this story. Had this temptation not assailed her, she might have passed on through life a restless, striving, discontented spirit, but still a comparatively guiltless one; but having tasted of the fruit of evil—having put forth her hand to grasp that which of right belonged to another—she felt awaken within her a fierce determination to secure, at any cost to others, the name and fortune she had risked so much to win. Such faint sympathy as she had felt for the sister she had robbed, and left to the mercy of Macon, died out of her heart, and she now only thought of Estelle as a rival who must be put out of the way—it mattered not how, nor when.

Her heart swelled with pride as she thought of the wealth and power a bold stroke had placed in her hand, and she was resolute to use both against the man who had aided her to mount to the pinnacle of fortune. Macon was the one drawback to her perfect content in the future that opened before her, and again she thought over the fate she had decreed him, and decided that no other course was open to her; for if he were allowed to live after she had shown him that she had only used him for her own purposes, Hester knew that he would become her most vindictive and relentless foe. In the fury of his baffled hopes he might even kill her, she thought with a shudder.

Spencer saw the shiver, and with much anxiety said:

"I am really afraid that this night journey will be too much for you. Shall I close the window? The air is becoming chilly."

"Thank you—I am not cold, but I begin to feel the want of sleep. I believe I will lie down on this seat, and try to gain such repose as is possible."

He arranged his satchel as a pillow, and covered her with her travelling shawl; he then took the opposite seat, stretched out his feet, and braced himself against the side of the car, to watch over her slumbers.

Hester slept fitfully, in spite of the care that was on her mind, for she felt that not yet was she in a position to deal with all the difficulties that might arise upon the novel path she must so warily tread, if disgrace and defeat were to be evaded.

She had not yet had time to examine her sister's desk thoroughly, but before another day passed she would make herself mistress of its contents, and from the correspondence of Estelle's friends discover all that it was necessary for her to know. She must also write to Mrs. Murray and to Raymond De Lorme, and she must find some scrap of Miss Landry's writing, and practice till she could make at least a passable imitation of it before she ventured on such a step as that.

When day was dawning she sat up, arranged her dress, and in answer to the inquiry of her companion, said:

"I feel much refreshed by such sleep as I have snatched. I hope that you too have had some repose. Every time I opened my eyes I saw you sitting with your head against that hard wood, and I felt as if I had robbed you in taking possession of your satchel. I found it a very nice pillow."

"I am glad of that; for I feared that your head would ache from so hard a support, after suffering as much with it as you lately have. Don't you feel as if some refreshment will be welcome after so uncomfortable a night?"

"I dare say it would, but we must wait till we stop for breakfast, and that will not be for several hours yet."

"Not quite so bad as that. I am an experienced traveller, and I know how to provide for contingencies. You did not ask me what was in my basket when I put it under the seat, but now I will show you."

Spencer drew out a covered basket, from which he took a bottle of wine, two cups, a box of sardines, and displayed in the bottom of it quite a pyramid of crackers, wrapped in white paper.

"How very thoughtful of you! I feel as if I shall enjoy our impromptu meal very much."

"I knew that you would need something of the sort before we were likely to find any*thing to eat on the road, and I provided these. The landlord assured me that the wine is pure, and his wife put up the things for me. After partaking of these, we can wait for a late breakfast with my grandmother."*

"At what hour shall we reach Boston?"

"We are due at half-past eight, and by nine we will be with Mrs. Spencer. I wrote to her by the mid-day train, and we shall find her carriage awaiting us on our arrival."

Spencer opened the box of sardines with his knife, and they partook of the refreshment he had so thoughtfully provided. Hester drank a cup of wine and felt her courage coming back to her, and not a moment too soon, for it was almost immediately put to a severe test.

A head was raised up from the seat behind that on which Spencer sat, and a voice that sounded familiar to Hester said:

"God bless my soul, Miss Blake! Is that you so near me all this time, and I didn't know you? Have you lost any of your friends since I saw you, for I see that you are in black?"

The speaker was a middle-aged man, with clouded eyes and a red face. Hester recognized him as a broken down physician, living in Blanton, whose practice had been taken from him by Macon, on account of his dissipated habits. Dr. Presley had never been inside of her mother's house, but Hester knew his person perfectly well, as he evidently knew her.

She regarded him with an air of cold surprise, and said:

"There is some mistake, sir; I do not think that I have ever had the pleasure of seeing you before."

"By Jupiter, that's cool! I don't suppose that you ever came to the village without seeing me, since that owl in spectacles came there to take the bread out of my mouth, and give me nothing to do to take me out of the town. I know *you* well enough any how, and I hope you're running off with this chap here just to spite Macon."

Spencer here interposed, and haughtily said:

"This lady is under my protection, sir, and you will oblige me by speaking to her no more. She is the daughter of the gentleman who died at the Brown farm last night, and we are taking her father's remains to Boston."

Though brusque in his manners, Dr. Presley was a gentleman, and he hastened to say:

"I beg pardon of you and the lady, sir, but I would have sworn that she is Miss Blake. I never saw such a likeness in my life. It can't be accidental. I suppose there's relationship between the parties, for I remember now that Mrs. Blake went out to nurse the poor gentleman. But they said his daughter was hurt almost as badly as he was. I didn't think that popinjay, Julian Macon, had skill enough to get her out so soon; but I dare say he lied about her, and made her out worse than she was."

While he spoke thus, Hester steadied her nerves, and quietly replied:

"Mrs. Blake's daughter is allied to me by blood, and that will account for the resemblance with which I was myself struck when I saw her. If we were together, however, I think you would discover many points in which we differ. As to Dr. Macon, I can only say that he was most kind to my poor father and myself, and to his skill I am indebted for my ability to take this journey."

"His skill! By all the gods, I should like to know how and where he acquired it! I've grown gray in my profession, and here is a youngster that steps in, and without so much as 'by your leave,' ousts me from— But I beg your pardon, Miss; I mistook you for a very pretty girl, but I am sure *you* would have better taste than to have such a man as Macon making love to you. There—I beg your pardon again, and I'll take myself off, lest I say something more that I ought not to; but I'll swear you're wonderfully like Hester Blake. There's the whistle, and luckily for me, I get off at the next station."

He bowed, stumbled to his feet, and hastened out of the car, and Spencer sat looking at Hester in silent surprise. For the first time it struck him as strange that he should have seen neither Mrs. Blake nor her daughter when he went to the farm; and why had the relationship which existed between them and the Landry family been withheld?

Hester met his questioning glance with an air of deprecating embarrassment as she said, in a tone that was only audible to him:

"It is very painful to speak of the errors of one we fondly love. I would have concealed from you what that coarse man compels me to reveal, but you must wait for an explanation till we are in your grandmother's carriage. Then I can speak freely with you, but not now."

Spencer bowed in silence, and the train, after a momentary halt, dashed on again. At six o'clock it stopped half an hour for breakfast, and Spencer brought Hester a cup of hot coffee when she refused to get out. He walked thoughtfully up and down the platform while they waited, and she felt as if she would have given much to be able to read the thoughts passing in his mind.

She had no fear as to her ability to dispel any present doubts to which that unfortunate encounter had given birth; but in the future, when Macon appeared in the character of her suitor, might Spencer not remember the words of Presley, and draw from them such inferences as must fatally enlighten him? She comforted herself with the thought that by that time she would so have loaded him with benefits, that he would not be likely to turn on her and betray her, even if he did suspect the foul wrong that had been done.

When Spencer resumed his seat, and they set out again, Hester furtively watched him, and she fancied that he was graver and less cordial in his manner than before the encounter with Dr. Presley. He was waiting, she thought, and ready to weigh every word of the revelation she must make to him, and with cunning tact, she wove the story she meant to tell.

When they reached their place of destination, they found a plain old-fashioned carriage, with an antiquated negro driver, awaiting them. The old man took off his hat respectfully, and seemed to expect a recognition from the young lady. Hester passed on without observing this, and Spencer said:

"Scipio knew you when you were a child, and he thought you would remember him. The old fellow has been looking forward to your arrival here with almost as much pleasure as any of the rest of us."

"How thoughtless of me not to remember him!" she exclaimed. "But my mind is so filled with other things, that it is not wonderful. How do you do, Uncle Sip? I am very glad to see you again, and I hope you like living at the North."

"'Tan't wonderful that you didn't know me, Miss Estelle, for you was a little picaninny when I come 'way from de ole plantation. I likes the Norf mighty well, only for the cold. You's growed up mighty han'some, but you's come to trouble airly, Missy. I was mortal sorry to hear 'bout—"

"There—that will do, Sip," said Spencer quickly. "Attend to your horses now, and reserve your condolences for a more suitable time."

The negro drew back, and Hester was glad to shelter herself in the carriage, for this seemed a new danger on her path. When they had driven off, she said:

"It is so long since I was at home that I have forgotten all about this old man. Tell me something of him, that I may not mortify him by showing how little I can remember concerning him."

"Scipio was the personal attendant of my uncle De Lorme, and at his death he freed him, and gave him a small sum of money. He chose to come North, and he lived a fast life till his funds were gone. Then he came to Mrs. Spencer for employment, and for the last eight years he has been her carriage driver."

"Thank you; it would have been a wonder if I had remembered him, for I must have been a wee lassie indeed when I saw him last."

Hester sank into silence, and after a few moments Spencer gravely said:

"I must remind you of the explanation you promised to give me. In half an hour we shall be at my grandmother's, and—and—Pardon me, Estelle, for seeming to exact a confidence, but I am really very anxious to know how you are related to this Mrs. Blake and her daughter."

"Then you have not guessed the truth," she replied, in a low tone, which to his ear seemed to vibrate with deep feeling—"the painful and humiliating truth which I shrink from telling you. Hester Blake is my father's daughter; she is several years older than I am, but we are both like him, and I really think we might pass for each other. Papa came out of his way to see her, and give into her own hands a settlement he had made upon her, providing for her future. In the terrible calamity that cost him his life, his luggage was lost, and with it the papers which had been prepared. In his last moments he dictated a letter to the poor girl herself, stating his wishes with reference to her. I lay insensible for many hours, and I was not in a condition to understand what was going on till he was gone. But when I saw Miss Blake I did not doubt the truth of what was told me by herself and her mother. I could do no less than acknowledge the tie of blood that unites us, and pledge my word to carry out the last wishes of my father."

Long before she ceased speaking, Spencer had taken her hand, and held it firmly clasped in his own, for he felt self-condemned for the doubts he had suffered to enter his mind. He warmly said:

"How noble you are! How much above the standard of ordinary women have you risen, Estelle! I admire—I respect you more than ever. I am sorry that I forced you to speak of what must be so painful to you, but I assure you that I think more highly of you than before."

"Thank you. I shall only do my duty, and no one deserves undue credit for that. Would you like to see the letter dictated under such painful circumstances? I gave in exchange for it, a promissory note for the fifteen thousand dollars which my father had set aside as a provision for my half-sister, and I have it with me."

She drew the letter from her pocket, and Spencer glanced down the page, and then said:

"How singular it is that members of the same family so often write alike, in spite of all the efforts of the writing-master to form a different hand. You must have been struck with the similarity of this writing to your own."

Hester's heart gave a glad bound, for this assurance removed one of the most formidable difficulties with which she had to contend; but she controlled her exultation, and quietly said:

"Yes; that poor girl and I are alike in more respects than one. It is my intention to do all that I can for her, and I will not lose sight of her in the future. Mrs. Blake is herself a very superior woman, and highly educated."

"I understand—I have heard of her before. It is a painful story, and I am sorry that I forced you to speak of it."

"This unfortunate woman's career has been irreproachable since she came away from her old home, and she has lived only in her daughter. When she came to me in sickness and suffering, I accepted her kindness in the spirit in which it was offered, and I shall seek to repay it by every means in my power."

"That will be right—will be worthy of yourself," Spencer warmly replied, as he refolded the letter and returned it to her. "Every line in this epistle must have gone home to your tender heart."

"Yes, it touched me very deeply," she faltered, in a voice which sounded as if suffocated with emotion.

A few moments later the carriage drew up in front of a pretty suburban residence, with trees, grass and flowers in abundance around it, and in the distance a fine view of the sea.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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—Vanity may be likened to the smooth-skinned and velvet-footed mouse, nibbling about forever in expectation of a crumb; while self-esteem is too apt to take the likeness of the huge butcher's dog, who carries off your steaks, and growls at you as he goes.

STORY OF THE FEVER-STRICKEN SHIP.—THE CAPTAIN'S WIDOW.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Long already there on me,
'Mid the billows of the sea,
Had the Fever-fiend been raging,
And within the day and night
Was he still fierce battle waging.
Dead were most of all the crew,
Yet the yellow fires kept flying—
Oh, what a new horror throbs!
For the Captain's self is dying.
"Dying!" the weak remnant whispered;
Soon a wail to Heaven sped:
"O, thou Father, God of mercy,
He is dead—our *Captain's* dead!
Who is here that now can save us?
No one navigation knows!"
Scarcely had the awful question
Ceased that so despairing rose,
When a woman from the cabin
Leaped on deck and raised her hand—
With sweet, sad face, firmly saying,
"Listen! *I* will take command!
I, once wife and now his widow,
From him some of sea-craft learned."
Oh, what strength on her pale forehead!
Oh, what fire in her eyes burned!
So she took there in mid-ocean
Her lost husband's place, and ne'er,
Of my reaching port in safety,
If she lived, had I a fear.
She lived, by the good God's mercy
Lived! her own heroic form
Cheering up the fever-stricken,
Guiding me through calm and storm.
Here to anchor she has brought me;
Sacred has she made my frame,
And I know my woman captain,
The devoted Emma Gifford,
Wears a world-remembered name.

STORY OF CARL ROSBACH.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Master Luben, thou hadst better look to thy daughter."

"Eh?"

"Look to thy daughter, I say."

"Pshaw! They are children."

"In years—yes; but in heart they are old. Watch them for thyself."

And Joseph Luben, thus warned, bowed his head and reflected.

Let us understand the case:

Joseph Luben, now verging upon threescore, was the Organist and Music-master of the Grand Duke, and the leading man in the musical departments of the church and the opera. In the years agone a man named Martin Rosbach had been janitor and porter of the great cathedral, and had had care of the organ, and, under the music-master's direction, had made repairs upon the colossal instrument when repairs were necessary. This Martin Rosbach had been a genius in his way, and a dear lover of music. He had married a woman for his wife whose only qualifications were a sweet disposition, and a sweet voice—a woman who had been otherwise unfortunate, and who had been banished from opera and church choir for the brand that was upon her. But Martin had loved her, and had lived most happily with her; and a son had been born to them—born while they were both finding their chief comfort of life in love and music. The child had been named Carl, and he had grown up to be a fair-haired, sweet-faced boy, with a pair of large blue eyes that gleamed like sapphires in the changing light. And Carl had been suffered to attend his father about the great organ, and had waited upon the musicians in various ways. In fact, at the age of ten years the boy had become so handy that he could not well be spared, and he was regarded as one of the fixtures of the organ loft.

When Carl was twelve years old his father died, and from that time the boy had almost done a man's work.

Joseph Luben had married late in life, and his only child living was a daughter named Olivia, only a few months younger than Carl. The two children had been thrown together much in the music gallery, and not a thought of danger had entered the Master's mind until a friend had warned him, as we have seen.

Joseph Luben watched, as he had been directed, and ere long he was startled by the self-evident state of affairs. Carl Rosbach was only thirteen years of age, and Olivia not quite so old, and yet the flood of a great love was round about them,—it poured out from their eyes, and murmured in their speech, and it was deep and solemn. The Master was troubled. He would rather see his daughter stricken down with mortal disease than see her given up to the son of the poor janitor and the branded woman. And his resolve was quickly made. He called Carl to him one day, and having placed a small sum of money in his hands, he dismissed him from the theatre and from the cathedral, and told him he should require his services no more.

"I may speak with Olivia before I go?" said the boy, when he could command speech.

The Master did not stop to consider, but spoke out bluntly the thoughts that moved him:

"No," he thundered—not loudly, but darkly and rumblingly,—"I send thee away to separate thee from my child! I would have thee together no more.—There,—now go. Thou wilt find work enough if thou art modest and honest. Learn a trade. Do anything."

Carl Rosbach descended the stone steps from the cathedral loft like one stupefied; but the morning-star was rising when he knew it not. In the vestibule he met Olivia Luben, and when she asked him why he was cast down, he told her the story.

Old before their time—their souls matured in the spirit of music—and their hearts throbbing to the measure of divine melody,—they had loved with a love as strong as older lovers might have known.

"What shall I do?" cried Carl. "O! how dark it will be henceforth. My light of life is stricken out,—my morning-star is drifted from my sight!"

The girl caught him by the arm.

"Carl," she said, "go and be a man. There is music in your soul—O, how much!—more, far more than you know. *I* know it, though, for I have felt it. Go,—and if, in the years, you come back to me with a true heart, my love shall be yours, as it is now!"

"Olivia!"

"I promise it, Carl!"

* * * * * * *

Drucilla Rosbach was shocked, but not greatly surprised, when she heard that her boy had been turned out from the conservatory. She was a woman well used to depending upon her own resources, and in the present instance she gave but little time to repining.

"My boy," she said, with her hand upon his head, "God is good. This is the best thing that could possibly have happened. I should never have had the heart to send you away. Thanks to Herr Joseph for having done it. Carl, thou hast musical ability of the very highest order; but it is cramped here in Weimar. When thou wert born thy father and myself found all our joy in music, and the spirit was made a part of thee at that time. In Vienna lives my brother, Sebastian Ulsdorf, attached to the Emperor's orchestra. I will send thee to him if thou wilt go. He will receive thee kindly, I know; and for my sake he will help thee—will help thee much if thou wilt show him thou canst help thyself."

The boy said he would go to Vienna. It was hard to leave his mother—hard to leave Weimar—but the future was before him, and his manhood was to be gained.

The preparations for the journey were speedily made, and with a change of linen in his light knapsack, and with the old violin, which his father had left, in a bag under his arm, he set forth. His stock of money was very small, but his hope was large; and at the inns where he stopped, his violin seldom failed to yield him more than he required for sustenance. At length he reached Lintz, where he took passage on one of the large river boats for Vienna, and the captain, struck by his bright and winning appearance, gave him a berth under comfortable shelter upon the after part of the upper deck. There were many passengers on board, some of whom, Carl thought, from the deference paid to them, must be men of note. But he asked no questions,—it was not his habit to be inquisitive touching things which did not concern him.

The evening was calm and beautiful, and the full moon, just rising above the forest trees, gave a strange charm to the scene. It was near midnight, and Carl Rosbach sat upon the deck and looked up into the starry vault. Then he arose and leaned over the rail, and looked down into the shimmering depths of the Danube. He thought of his mother; and he thought of the bright-faced girl who had promised to wait for him through all the years that must lead up to his manhood; and then he thought of his dead father, and of the paternal smile he should behold no more on earth. And thus his thoughts came to the old violin. He took it out from its bag, thinking to whisper his love through its inspired voice to his father's spirit. So he felt as he drew the bow over the strings. He had thought of no known melody,—a new language was in his soul, and he was to give it form in music. He thought of his self-denying, loving mother, and sweet and grateful were the notes that awoke the air. He thought of the bright-faced girl of his boyish affection, and the notes grew plaintive and pathetic. Anon, with the inspiration of hope and firm resolve, the music swelled to grander melody, and even the player himself was enraptured by the marvellous sounds of his own producing.

At length he dropped the violin upon his knees, and bowed his head, and on the next moment he felt a touch upon the shoulder, and a voice asked,—

"Who art thou?"

Carl looked up and beheld a number of people standing not far away, but two men were close by his side, whom in the strong moonlight he could see distinctly. The man who had touched him was of middle-age, of benign aspect, and wore a bright golden ornament upon his breast. The other man was younger, with large, bright eyes that gleamed strangely.

"Who art thou?" repeated the man, kindly.

"I am Carl Rosbach, of Weimar."

"Who has been thy teacher in music?"

"I have gathered instruction from all," replied the boy, in a bewildered way. "My father was a musician when he lived; and my mother is a most sweet singer."

"Where didst thou find the composition thou hast just been playing?"

Again the boy seemed bewildered; but finally he touched his finger upon his heart.

"I was thinking," he said, "and my thoughts became burdensome for want of utterance."

"But thou hadst heard those strains before?"

"I had *felt* them. They dwelt in my father's memory—in my mother's love—in the ripple of another's sweet smile—in the deep river, and in the deeper heaven. God's own hand hath written music everywhere!"

Both the men gazed upon the boy with wonder, and at length the one who had spoken before asked him whither he was going, and for what purpose; and upon this Carl, who liked the looks of the man, told his story.

"How now, Wolfgang," said the elder, turning to his companion, "have we not found a prize?"

"Aye, of a verity," answered Wolfgang.

"He shall be thine to instruct."

And then turning to the boy the man added,—

"I know thy uncle, Sebastian Ulsdorf, and can promise thee a kind reception in Vienna. Sleep to-night, and we will confer on the morrow."

And on the morrow Carl Rosbach was called into the cabin, and he there learned that the man who had touched him upon the shoulder on the night before, and to whom he had told his story, was the Emperor, Joseph II., and that the younger man, with the wondrous eyes, was the musical monarch, Wolfgang Mozart!

Down upon his knees sank the boy, with his head low bowed, and when he had been lifted to his feet his eyes were swimming, and bright tears were trickling down his fair cheeks. But not long was he suffered to rest beneath the burden of awe. Both Joseph and Mozart so strove that very soon they had won the lad's entire confidence, and when they called for his violin, and lifted him into the sphere of music, he was himself again, and at home.

Once in Vienna the Emperor took Carl Rosbach under his especial charge, and the promise which had been given in the boy did not fail in the man. Aye, more,—of all who were considered worthy to appear by the side of Joseph's "great magician," Mozart, none occupied a higher place than did the fair-haired nephew of old Sebastian Ulsdorf.

The years were passing at Weimar. Joseph Luben was growing old, and he knew that ere long his place at the head of the Grand Orchestra must be given to another. His daughter Olivia, grown to be a woman, and surpassingly beautiful, was yet unmarried. She had had many offers—some of them from men of wealth and station—but she had not listened. Her father had besought her to take from the favored ones a husband in vain.

Did Olivia know what was transpiring at Vienna? The bloom of hope upon her cheek, and the light of promise in her azure eyes, would seem to indicate that she was not entirely ignorant.

Had the Music-master known that his daughter, in her wanderings, often stopped in at the humble abode of Drucilla Rosbach, and that she there learned of the absent son, and that from thence she sent messages to the still beloved one, he might have been wroth; but he did not know.

It was on a pleasant day in early spring that the citizens of Weimar turned out to welcome the Grand Duke Ferdinand back from his winter's visit to Italy and to Vienna. Chief among his train they beheld a young man, with a fair and beautiful face, and of grand presence, whom he seemed delighted to honor; and it was whispered that this was the friend and pupil of Mozart, who had come to be Master of Music in the capital of Saxe-Weimar.

That evening Joseph Luben was invited to visit the Ducal Palace, and to bring with him his daughter. The old man went, and he found the Grand Duke in the midst of the chief men of his court, and with him, upon his right hand, was the youthful stranger of the golden hair and azure eyes.

"Master Joseph," said Ferdinand, with a bright smile, "I introduce to you the Baron von Feldsberg, whom we have induced to come with us to our realm to relieve thee of the burden which thine advancing years must have rendered irksome."

Old Luben took the hand of the young man, and as he looked into the handsome face he gave a great start.

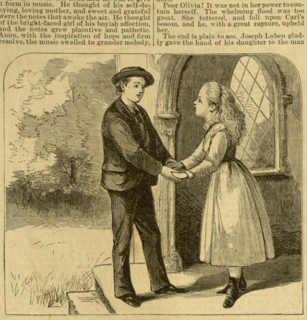
The youth smiled.

"His Grace is pleased to give me the title which the Emperor insisted on bestowing upon me," he said; "but I like my own name better. Call me Carl Rosbach, and nothing more."

At first the old master was as one stupefied; then followed bewilderment; and before he could fully recover his senses the Grand Duke had led up another for introduction to his hero.

Poor Olivia! It was not in her power to contain herself. The whelming flood was too great. She tottered, and fell upon Carl's bosom, and he, with a great rapture, upheld her.

The end is plain to see. Joseph Luben gladly gave the hand of his daughter to the man who was to succeed him in office; and he even accepted to his warm friendship the mother whom he had heretofore looked coldly upon. As for Olivia, she was amply repaid for her years of faithful waiting, being one of the happiest among the happy, and one of the proudest of the proud—not proud within herself, but proud of the husband whom even princes delighted to honor, and at the shrine of whose genius the world of music knelt in adoration.



SCIENCE.

Captain Sherard Osborn of the British Navy lately addressed the Royal Geographical Society in advocacy of a new English expedition to the North Pole. He predicted that the final laurels of Polar discovery would be wrung from his countrymen by German or Swedish navigators, unless a fresh effort was made by England at once. His sentiments were received with much favor by the Society, and Sir Leopold McClintock, the discoverer of the remains of Sir John Franklin's party, agreed with the speaker that the best route to pursue was that through Smith's Sound. Dr. J. D. Hooker dwelt upon the advantages which botanical science might derive from the proposed expedition, in view of the discovery of fossil plants at Disco, in Greenland, which indicate the former prevalence of a temperate climate in latitude 70 degrees North.

Professor Piazzi Smyth, the Astronomer Royal for Scotland, is well known for his researches concerning the Great Pyramid of Egypt. He esteems its scientific relations of the highest interest and importance, and maintains that its dimensions "afford the standards and units of weight and measure which have been the greatest favorites with the greatest number of all peoples through all history down to the present day." It is situated at the centre of the land surface of the globe, and its altitude is contained precisely one thousand million times in the mean distance of the earth from the sun. Curiously enough, Professor Smyth thinks that the Egyptians were themselves ignorant of these asserted Great Pyramid standards.

Interesting geographical discoveries have been made in Central Asia by a native corporal of sappers in the British East Indian army, known as a havildar. He was trained as an explorer by the officers of the great trigonometrical survey of India, who taught him how to make scientific measurements whereby to ascertain the latitude, longitude, and height above the level of the sea, of the localities which he visited.

The government of Queensland, moved by the similarity between the geological structure of the South African diamond region and that of many parts of Australia, has offered a reward of one thousand pounds sterling to the first discoverer of an Australian diamond drift or field, and has also designated the district in which the most competent judges believe that such a discovery will be made, if made at all.

Mr. Richard A. Proctor, in a recent lecture before the Royal Institution, on star cloudlets or nebulæ, said that of these there were only five known to the ancients. Up to the time of the Herschels the entire number discovered was about one hundred and fifty; but each of these great astronomers added about twenty-five hundred to the list, and the total number of known nebulæ now amounts to nearly six thousand.

Nearly twenty-three thousand persons fell victims to the small-pox in England last year, and the disease continues unusually prevalent, its character, both in regard to the number and severity of the cases, being probably worse than it has ever been heretofore, since vaccination came into general use.

A novel torpedo has been designed at the Royal laboratory, Woolwich, England. It is shaped like a fish, and is about five feet long, with a tail contrived to work like a screw propellor, by which it can be impelled with great force and accuracy of aim against the side of a ship four hundred yards distant.

A German investigator has ascertained that bituminous coal loses one third in weight and one half in gas-making qualities, by exposure to the weather. Even in the more compact anthracite there is a considerable loss, so that it is clearly economical to keep coal under cover.

The constantly improving facilities of communication between the cholera infected centres of Persia and India and the markets of Russia and the Black Sea, are believed to increase the danger of a great epidemic of cholera in Western Europe.

Guinea fowls, ostriches, pheasants, hares, deer, Angora goats and brown trout have been acclimated and reared in considerable numbers in several districts of Australia, through the efforts of the Acclimatization Society of Victoria.

Nitrite of amyl, the chemical compound now administered as a medicine in cases of heart disease—angina pectoris—and as an antidote for hydrate of chloral, is prepared for medicinal use from commercial fusel oil.

Husavik, a town on the northern coast of Iceland, was visited by an earthquake in April which destroyed twenty houses, but no lives. The shocks continued at intervals for three days.

The Japanese government has engaged Mr. Henry M. Smith, a graduate of the School of Mines of Columbia College, in this city, to open a coal mine and erect a blast furnace in Japan.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Widow (Ontario, Canada) says: "Your paper is such a favorite in this country, and its answers to correspondents seem to me so very appropriate and to the point, that I venture to ask your advice on a subject that I am afraid you will think rather foolish for a person of my age and experience. I am almost thirty-one, a widow, and comfortably situated as regards worldly circumstances. An old lover of mine, who began the world with every prospect of a brilliant and happy future, remained but a few years in the profession of his choice, became very dissipated, and, altogether, has not been successful, or done at all well since. Although we have not met for a very long time until within the last year, he was always much attached to me, and blames me for all his 'misfortunes.' He says that my marriage was the primary cause of his leaving his profession and becoming so unsettled afterward. More than a year ago he came here, after a long absence, and to all appearances was very 'steady.' His friends thought him thoroughly reformed; but since then he went back to the 'States,' and came here a fortnight ago, looking, I am told, very miserable and seedy. I directly put this down as the effects of dissipation, but he denies this, and says he lost his money in New York and has had a very rough time. I must believe this, as I have no way of finding out the contrary. He has friends; could do well enough, and I am sure does not drink at present, as he spends a great part of his time at my house. When I first knew him I was too young to be a judge of character, but a clergyman who was a school-mate of his told me that he is naturally of too fickle and unstable a temperament ever to become settled or change for the better. Now I know him to be of a very kind and affectionate disposition, and have thought that he might be the victim of circumstances, as he has not been happy. He has asked me to try and love him, and says he can never go far wrong so long as he has me. I am afraid I could easily do this, if I felt confident that my influence would cause him to become settled and thoroughly eradicate this, I believe his only vice. Now, dear *Ledger*, will you give me your best advice what to do? Shall I put him to some test, or shall I dismiss him altogether? I look very much younger than I am, and could make a good match; besides, I have been told that his being so much here may create scandal and prevent others from coming to visit me. Even if it did, I would find it very hard to send him away altogether, as he is not employed at present, and never seems so happy as when with me. I have heard since, and he acknowledges it, that he spoke of me in a disrespectful manner. He said that although I was still pretty, I was becoming rather *passée*; and he is older than I am. Now do you think that if he loved me he would utter such a sentiment?" We are unwilling to injure the prospects of your old lover; but we are bound to give the best counsel. You had better let the gentleman live elsewhere, until he has given evidence of a thorough reform; and it is a great risk to marry any man who has been weak enough to fail in life and go into dissipation because he missed his aim in one particular matter. Take care that you do not marry in haste, and repent at leisure.

Ex-Merchant (Xenia, O.) says: "From twelve years of active mercantile pursuit, I have, by practising the most rigid economy, acquired a small competency; and I now respectfully ask your favor as to the best manner for investment. I have thought of purchasing government bonds, but do not know which series would return the largest interest. Should I purchase bonds of any series at the rate of their premium valuation, would I receive any interest above that valuation for the first year? Your large business transactions and general knowledge of monetary affairs, warrant me in making this application, and I hope to be among those who receive favors through your correspondents' column, at an early day. Do you admire this style of penmanship?" To dispose at once of the less important matter, your handwriting has the merit of great plainness and regularity. It would require rather much time for ordinary purposes. It would be wise for you to consult a banking firm, in whose sagacity and integrity you have confidence, as to the kind of bonds and the rates of interest. Houses like Fisk & Hatch do business of this kind, and there is a return for their commission in the greater security you have against errors. Any one acquainted with real estate transactions could invest your money so as to get better interest than government bonds pay; but then you require to have an intelligent and reliable agent, if you do not know the securities yourself.

A Working Woman (Baltimore) says: "I often read your pithy answers, though I seldom trouble you with questions. Why are not mechanics as well received in so-called good society as preachers, pedagogues, doctors, lawyers, bankers, brokers, merchants, clerks, book-keepers, military officers, politicians and idlers? What is to degrade a man in becoming a mechanic? and why are so many parents unwilling to apprentice their sons? Why do so many girls say they would not marry mechanics? and why do professional men discard female relatives, if they marry them? Why can men, after giving up their trades, be received favorably by those who would not associate with them before? I know a school-ma'am who disowns her brothers because they are mechanics, and for no other reason. Please answer these, to me, important questions, for I am the daughter of one, and the sister of three mechanics, and would not disown one of them for the sake of associating with any human being. I am proud of them. They are God's noblest works—honest men and mechanics." All these questions are to be answered on the general principle of the historian who declared the British Empire contained nearly forty millions of people "mostly fools." There has been extensive emigration from Europe to this country. Keep to your own common-sense views.

A Ladies' Man (Memphis) says: "Noticing your answers to correspondents in the New York *Ledger*, and deeming them just what they should be, I have concluded to ask your opinion in regard to a point of etiquette. Suppose a gentleman is accompanying a young lady to church on Sunday evening, and on going home after services another should come up and offer her his arm as an assistant escort for part of the way home, what courtesy should the gentleman accompanying the young lady show the other, in case the young lady accepts the proffered arm? Is it right for the young lady to accept the arm offered? and is it correct, according to the rules of etiquette, for a young man to join in with a couple in that way? By answering the above questions as early as possible you will oblige very much." A considerate gentleman would not offer to accompany a lady and gentleman unless he had an intimation that it would be agreeable; and only the lady is likely to give it. Of course, he is to be treated as the lady's friend by any gentleman who accompanies her. In most well-ordered communities one gentleman is held to be adequate protection for one lady. This particular lady may be exceptionally weak, or may wish to have two beaux on her string, or two strings to her bow.

Anxious (Pittsburgh, Pa.) says: "I have been a reader of your paper for the past two years, and have not yet had occasion to come to you for advice, but I am in such a position now, that I do not consider myself qualified to judge for myself; so if you will give me some advice on the subject, you will greatly oblige me. I am engaged to a young lady whom I love dearly, and she used to say she returned it; but of late she has been talking of a gentleman, a mutual acquaintance, and saying that she 'loves him dearly,' and that she 'would rather marry him than any other man in the world,' and similar expressions. Now I may be unjustly jealous—which God forbid—but it strikes me that this is not proper language for an engaged lady to use with regard to a single gentleman, or, in fact, any gentleman except her future husband. What shall I do? I await your answer with anxiety." She must lack a right sense of duty and propriety; and we—if so placed—would tell her that such a state of heart is inconsistent with her engagement, and release her from it. Her language invites this course. She is probably fickle, or ambitious; she is certainly a good girl to part with.

Cid (Harrisonville, Mo.) says: "I wish to propose the following case: namely, A young gentleman falls in love with a young lady, addresses her, and is accepted. She afterward ascertains that he is in the habit of drinking, though he does not become intoxicated. She insists that he shall quit drinking entirely. He declines, and says she ought to place more confidence in him, inasmuch as he don't get drunk. She, thinking that her request was a reasonable one, and his excuse for not complying insufficient, breaks the engagement. The question is, Did she do right, or not?" First of all, she had a right to require it; since so many are ruined by drink, there is some risk in marrying one who drinks. She has a right to run the least possible risk. Whether she should exercise her right in this case is a question to be determined by the circumstances—such as the surroundings, age, general character, etc., of the gentleman. She was probably on the safe side.

James O. Smith (Columbus, Ga.) says: "If two young men write a note to two young ladies, asking the pleasure of calling after tea, and their note is accepted, and afterward two other young men write a note to call at the same hour, and their note is accepted, do you think the young ladies would be treating the first two young men with due respect? Do you not think it very wrong in the young ladies, and if you were the first two young men, would you call or not? Give me an early reply, and much oblige." We see nothing disrespectful in this. Cannot two young ladies see more than two young men in an evening? Don't be foolish. Here in the North, young ladies can receive and entertain as many as call, smile on them all, and dismiss all with the happy impression on the mind of each that he had the very sweetest smile for himself.

A Constant Reader (Camilla, Ga.,) says: "I am just "Sixteen years of age and have decided to become a Merchant and I wish to be prepared for a Merchant in all its branches. Now what I wish to know is this— The names of all the Books that I should be thougherly acquainted *with*, Where is the best "American business College" What for a hand do I write— *Please* answer the above and you will greatly oblige—" We decline to give you a list at present. You had better provide yourself with a dictionary, grammar, and a good elementary work on composition, and after mastering these, write to us again. Your letter is very slovenly, and your "hand" far from clean. We do not pretend to discriminate among several excellent business colleges.

John Henry (New York) says: "Can you inform me through the columns of your excellent paper how a copy may be obtained of Sumner's great speech, made when the Johnson-Clarendon treaty was before the Senate for ratification, and oblige." Call at the office of any leading daily paper, and at least you can see the file; or write to Washington, where any friend can no doubt procure you a copy from the authorized reports.

Joppa (Alexandria, Va.) says: "Will you please inform me through the columns of your paper who wrote the lines,

"It is better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."

and oblige." Tennyson, in his "In Memoriam."

A Constant Reader (New York) concisely says: "Please inform me, through the medium of your *Ledger*, after whom was the State of Pennsylvania named, and oblige." William Penn.

Nemo (Canada) says: "It is as common with us to read your paper, in this outlying post of the British empire, as it is to peruse our local county sheet on Saturday evenings. I have been paying court to a young lady for about two years, and married her a few days ago. She is everything that is perfect in my eyes, and you must admit that an opinion from me, even as a husband and lover, must have some weight, when I tell you that I am a youth of some thirty summers, and possessed of no little experience at that. I am a physician and surgeon, in regular and somewhat lucrative practice. Now, both before our marriage and subsequently, my fair one has called my attention to reports circulated by interested parties, to the effect that I have on several occasions drank to excess. Now the plain truth is—and I keep back nothing from you—that I have got the worse for liquor on two occasions within the last ten years: once away from home, where nobody that knew me was present; at another time when only my sister was conscious of it. Now it must be confessed that there are occasions in a practitioner's life when one strong potation of spirits, to set him to rights, is apparently strongly called for and desired—when at least the effects of the liquor, not to say the taste, is urgently indicated. The people in general can seldom appreciate a doctor's proclivity for an occasional bumper, but his brethren of the profession will easily understand it. My wife does not wish me to join a Temperance Society, which I have offered to do, nettled at the innumerable slanders regarding me. I have just consulted one person, and he *consoled* me by saying that when a person is repeatedly spoken of as addicted to this or that particular vice, there is universally some good ground for it. I give you my solemn assurance to the contrary, and in your advice I wish you to act on this asseveration. Query: Should I immediately join a teetotal organization? Or should I endeavor to be nominally a moderate drinker, but practically a total abstainer?" In total abstinence from intoxicating drink there is absolute safety. You are intelligent enough to decide for yourself what you ought to do, taking all the circumstances of your case into the account. Your wife will be your best counsellor.

Florence Lee says: "Do you think I am too young to engage myself to a young man of the same age as myself? We will be eighteen this summer, I being a few months the oldest. We love each other dearly, and I know I can never love any one else as I do him, and he loves me the same. I have been in gentlemen's company a great deal for one no older than I am, and often thought I was in love before, but now I know I never was. We have been in each other's company constantly for one year, and I have loved him more and more all the time. He has been in a good school all his life, so he has a very good education, and now he is learning a good trade; is a member of the church, and has no bad habits at all. He has asked me to bind myself in an engagement till we are old enough to be married. I know we love each other now as well as any one can love. But do you think love as young as ours will always last? I feel that it will, but some say it won't. Having no friend to go to for advice, and not knowing myself what to do, I will do what you think would be best for me. One more question: Do you think it wicked to read your *Ledger* on Sundays?" We think you rather young to become engaged, particularly as you seem to have no parents to advise you; but if you fully believe in one another, it will not matter much whether a formal engagement takes place or not. There is no reason why such love should not last. As to the reading of the *Ledger* on Sunday, we can only say that while everything demoralizing or corrupting is rigidly shut out of the *Ledger*, we never hesitate to tell our readers that the *Sunday* is for religious purposes, except so far as necessity or mercy requires effort. This plan is best for mind, body, and estate. So we judge for ourselves; so we recommend to others.

K. W. A. (Northwest, Mo.) says: "I, a constant reader of your most valuable paper, the *Ledger*, come to you for the first time for advice, and hope you will be kind enough to heed my appeal. The case is simply this: I have been waiting on a young lady for about one year, and we have become very intimate and enjoy ourselves very well while together. The other day I wrote her a note, and requested her not to show it to any one under any circumstances whatever, as it concerned no one but ourselves; but on the same evening I learned that she had shown it to a friend immediately on receiving it. Now, what would you do were you in my place? Would you discontinue your visits, or would you call on her and demand an explanation? for I have every reason to believe she thinks well of me; but I don't know what to think of her conduct in this matter. By answering immediately, you will greatly oblige." We should not abandon a good girl for what may have been want of thought, or a little harmless pride in getting a letter from you. We should get an explanation from her, and "try to be reasonable." Besides, it is very doubtful if a young man has a right to send letters to a young lady to whom he is not engaged and enjoin secrecy. It may be most proper for her to get the advice of a friend.

J. G. E. (Raleigh, N. C.) says: "When parents give a child a name, have they the privilege of changing the pronunciation of the name? Ought other people to call the child's name as it is generally pronounced, or as the parents pronounce it? For instance, when the name Leila is given to two girls of different families, and the parents of one call their daughter *Ligh*la, and the other call theirs *Lee*la, both spelling their names Leila, what is the proper pronunciation of the word? Also, please give me the correct pronunciation of the word Evelina." In the case of Leila, each child's parents may pronounce her name to suit their own fancy. The diphthong *ei* is sounded as *i* and also as *e*, in a certain class of words, at the option of the speaker. For example, neither is pronounced *nigh*ther or *nee*ther, and one pronunciation is as correct as the other. Evelina is pronounced *Ev-e-lee-nah*.

Knowledge (New Preston, Conn.) says: "I am one of the left-armed veterans, and in the painting business. I desire to be as well informed as possible in that line. I know of no books upon that subject, and desire you, if you know of any reliable ones, to inform me of them, and where to get them. I am an admirer and reader of the *Ledger*, and take it regularly for my wife. I saw something in the correspondents' column, some time ago, about a book on painting, but the paper is missing. By replying, you will greatly oblige one of your most humble friends." There is an English series of shilling hand-books, published by Winsor & Newton, London, and on sale, at fifty cents each, in artists'-material stores in New York, which would suit your purpose. Any bookseller can get you the hand-book you want, by your writing down the description.

Lacon says: "Lately, while in conversation with a friend, I used the expression 'very wrong.' My friend objected to it, alleging as his reason, that since it would not be correct to say 'very right,' 'very wrong' would also be an error, as wrong is the opposite of right. I thought that, as one thing could be more wrong than another, therefore it would be correct to say 'very wrong.' We agreed to leave it to you, hoping that you will answer us in your Notices to Correspondents." Your friend is slightly wrong. "Very wrong," and "very right," though not peculiarly accurate, are quite common, and very forcible phrases. Very is equivalent to "eminently," or "emphatically," or "excessively," and is used as any other adverb may be employed.

B. O. C. (New Albany, Ind.) says: "As a reader of your paper, I take the liberty of asking two questions, which please answer through your answers to correspondents. First, from what did the Niagara river derive its name? Second, were the Seneca tribe of Indians so called by themselves, or was it a name given to them by the whites?" 1. The common impression is that Niagara is an Indian name. 2. The Seneca lake and district take their name from the Seneca Indians, one of the six nations. Whether they so called themselves or were so designated by the whites, it is impossible to say with certainty. The whites often mistook Indian names and called tribes by a word which they often heard pronounced and did not understand.

Industrious (New York) says: "I am a young married man, with but a limited acquaintance here, but with enough means to assist me in living comfortably, and I desire to secure a mercantile position, where my time will be employed, and I will be enabled to learn some business. Please inform me how I can secure it. I am willing to do anything honorable to attain this end." Either advertise, or speak to mercantile persons who will feel an interest in you and inform you of an opening, as it presents itself. You will probably have to make much personal inquiry; but it is better to decide slowly, and on accurate information, than to rush into something of doubtful value.

A United States Soldier says: "Please answer the following question, through the columns of your paper. Suppose a soldier stationed at one of the western forts, on frontier duty, deserts, what punishment would be inflicted, if he should be caught? Or, suppose he is not caught till after his time of service has expired, how then?" The punishment inflicted would be in the discretion of the authorities, and would vary from imprisonment with hard labor for a term of years to death. It would make no difference if he were not caught for years after his term of service had expired. His offence would never become outlawed.

J. C. (New York) says: "Will you be so kind as to state in your answers to correspondents what means I should take to find an uncle whom I have not heard from in twenty years, and who was at that time on board her Majesty's ship *St. Joseph*, of the British navy? Also, how to address a letter to the British War Office." Your best way to get trace of your uncle would be to write to his relatives for information about him. If that does not enable you to learn his fate, or whereabouts, then advertise in some London newspaper. If you address a letter simply, British War Office, London, England, it will be sure to reach its destination.

"Rob Roy" (Buffalo, N. Y.) says: "Please answer, in your Notices to Correspondents, how long is it since Dr. Livingstone was last in England? Is he a missionary as well as explorer, or is he simply an explorer?" Dr. Livingstone was a missionary, but finding himself unable to devote his energies to regular mission work consistently with his tastes and aims, he resigned his position, and became simply an explorer. He is a medical man and a clergyman, returned from Africa in 1856, superintended the publication of his "Missionary Travels," and returned to Africa, we think, about two or three years after.

Postmaster, (New Liberty, Ky.,) says: "There is some controversy in my little village in regard to the name of the Mr. Owen who held the debate with Alexander Campbell, in the year 1828, in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio. I think it was in that year that the debate was held. Some contend that it was Robert Dale Owen, while others contend that father and son were each named Robert Dale Owen. Please let us know in your next *Ledger*." It was Robert Owen who held the debate to which you refer.

William R.—We learn, since our former answer, that the American Literary Bureau are the agents of James Anthony Froude and Edmund Yates, in this country.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*